HM

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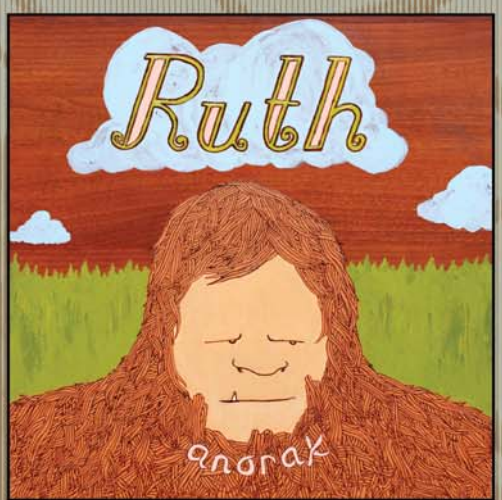

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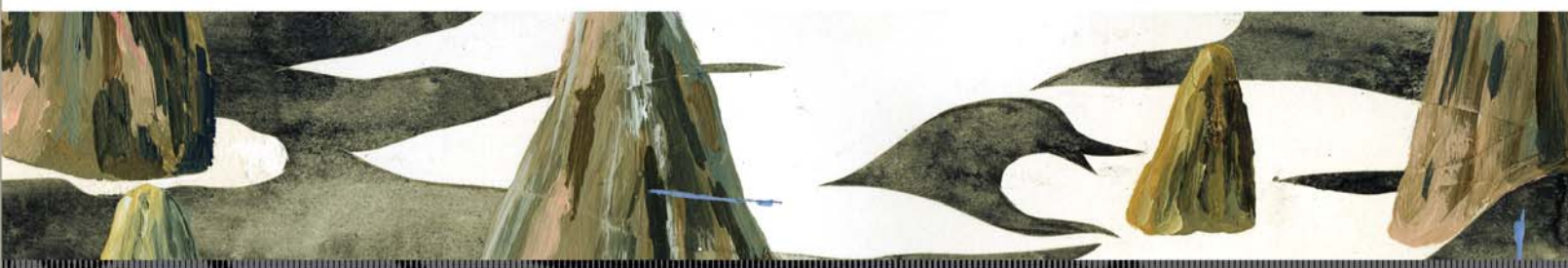

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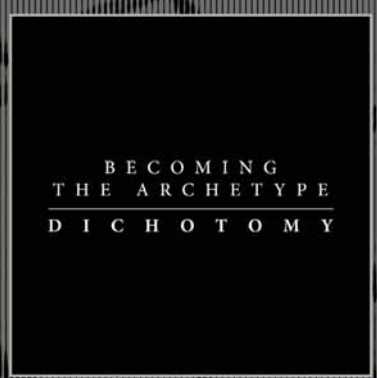

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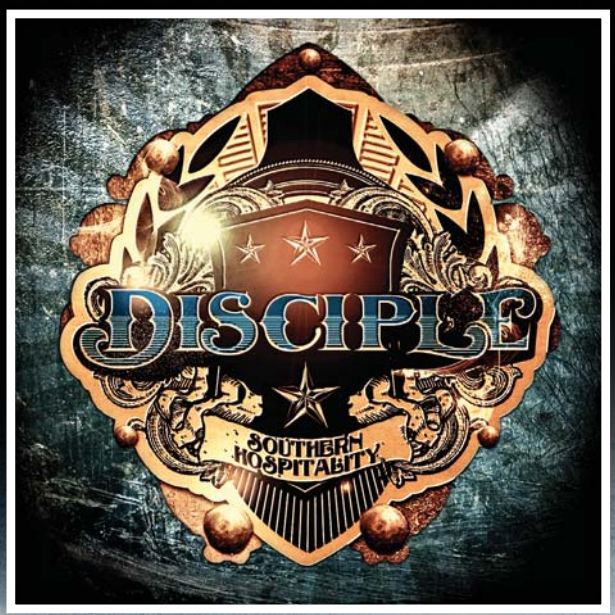

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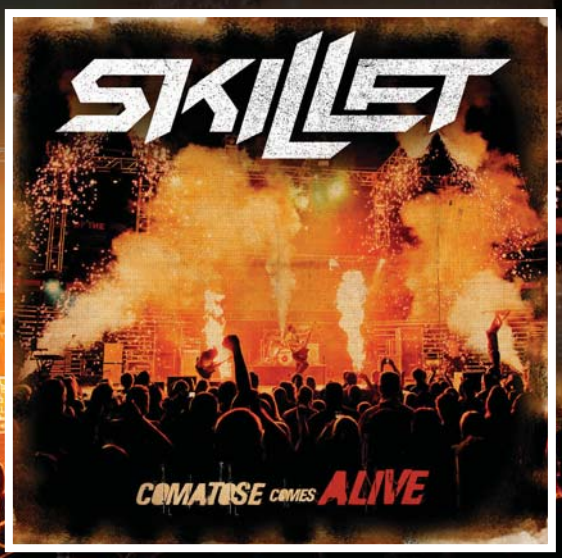

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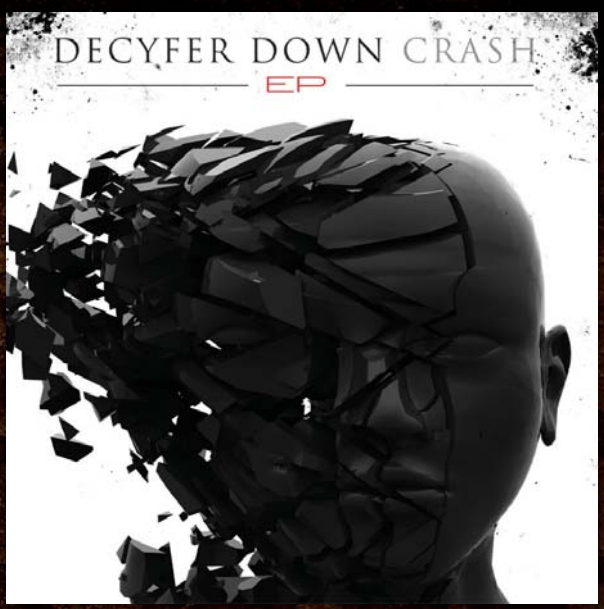

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From the editor

Doug Van Pelt

MY LAME FRIEND IS STUCK IN A RUT

I have a friend that likes old music. When I talk to this guy, he will ask me questions about guitarists like Tony Palacios or bands like Stryper and Guardian. It's okay to like old music. I like old music, too. I just have a deep appreciation for what's happening *right now* in music. I bet my friend, who doesn't read HM much anymore these days, probably hasn't purchased a CD by a new/current band in over ten years. I think that's sad, because there is so much good music being made right now. When I was at the Purple Door and Revelation Generation Festivals in late August, I was thoroughly amazed and impressed with the music being performed. I mean, check out some of the bands that were there: The Showdown; August Burns Red; Emery; Gwen Stacy; Denison Witmer; Derek Webb; Haste The Day; Seabird; The Myriad; Norma Jean; The Devil Wears Prada; Leeland; Sixpence None The Richer; Flyleaf; and As I Lay Dying... I mean, that lineup is ridiculous! Honestly, I felt incredibly blessed and thankful to be alive, watch and hear such great music. It is indeed a good time to be alive and have the senses of sight and hearing.

The current state of music, in my opinion, is strong and glorious. That's not to insinuate that one should ignore the past, though. We must not lose touch with our musical history. A great song is a great song. When we forget where we've come from, we lose some of the richness that is present in today's music. It is for this reason, by the way, that we've brought back the "Classic Moments in Christian Rock History" section. Instead of highlighting random great moments, however, we're going to spotlight a couple of landmark albums in each issue for the next two years. Lord willing, this will culminate in a list of the "Top 100 albums of Christian rock history" that we'll run in our 25th Anniversary issue (that's planned for July/August 2010).

It's been really great working with John, Levi, and Laurel for this issue. It's awesome how we consistently get great interns here at HM. Check out their "Intern Diaries" on our website to see what their summers were like. Have a great fall (and don't forget to vote online for our Readers' Poll – *hmmag.com/etc*).

We'd like to welcome 61 new readers from *Uprise Zine*. Hope you dig this issue.

SPINNING AT HM NOW

ULI JON ROTH	*Under A Dark Sky*	This enigmatic mystic can wail on guitar.
RED	*Innocence & Instinct*	Jealous? This hot release is delayed 'til '09.
KEITH GREEN	*The Greatest Hits*	A good collection from the archives.
UNDEROATH	*Lost in the Sound of...*	Makes Levi cry like an emo baby.
AS CITIES BURN	*Come Now Sleep*	Transforming album for a really good band.
NORMA JEAN	*The Anti-Mother*	Turns out it wasn't named for *that* movie after all...
PATTY GRIFFIN	*Children Running Through*	"Stay on the Ride"+"No Bad News" = insta-dancers.

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HARDNEWS
Quick & concise

DAY OF SILENCE
STAND TRUE'S ANNUAL EVENT GROWS

Since January 22, 1973 over 50,000,000 babies have had their voices silenced through surgical abortion in this nation alone. Over 4,000 children have their lives taken each day in the name of choice. Over 4,000 women are emotionally damaged every day.

On October 21st of this year, you might witness something unusual. On that day people from all over this nation will give up their voices for a day in solidarity for these children. Red arm bands and duct tape will identify them as taking part in the Pro-life Day of Silent Solidarity. They will carry fliers explaining why they are silent and educate others about the plight of the innocent children we are losing every day. Launched by Stand True in its fourth year, this silent demonstration has gained tons of momentum all over the USA. For more info, go to standtrue.com

POORLY BUILT PARACHUTE
FROM ROCK FANZINE TO ELECTRONICA

Dave Darr has been publishing *Uprise Zine* for three years now, but he's giving up the journalistic life for a stab at something else – electronic music. "I always liked metal and hardcore growing up. Some of my favorite artists still today are Zao, Living Sacrifice, Focal Point, and Strongarm. However, at some point I discovered (Euro electronic rock band) Portishead. It was love at first listen." Cue Poorly Built Parachute, his latest creative outlet, which released its debut album, *Evolution In Color*, in July. "I'm currently working on a graphic novel that I hope to publish next year. With all of this to say, *Uprise Zine* might be over, but I'm not going anywhere. I am an artist, a writer, and a musician and *Uprise Zine* was something I did for a period in my life. My story isn't over yet, there is much more to do." (Editors DVP and DD recently conspired to give former *Uprise Zine* subscribers this issue of *HM*.)

Underoath & The Almost have more in common...?

Underoath's Tim McTague and Jay Vilardi (The Almost) have formed a company with filmmaker Ryan Gardner – Audible Diversion Group – which specializes in film/audio production, online fulfillment, and they are working on retail distribution as well. Jay explains: "We made this company because no one else was giving us the outlet that we wanted, so we made it ourselves." Tim used to talk music industry with Jay and film with Ryan, so forming this company out of their friendship was natural. "We kind of just found ourselves in a weirdly perfect situation where we were all looking to do something different and it just made sense to merge forces," adds Tim. The group just finished recording an album for Safety, which they'll release digitally for free. Another band working with ADG is The Glass Ocean (photo above by Ryan Russell), which features ex-members from The Chariot – Keller Harbin and Joshua Beiser, who were both in the band for its infamous debut album (*Everything is Alive, Everything is Breathing, Nothing is Dead and Nothing is Bleeding*). [audiblediverisongroup.com]

News bullets

Paramore has just scored RIAA platinum certification for their breakthrough album *Riot,* with U.S. sales exceeding one million units. "Misery Business" is going to be one of the songs available on the new installment of the popular Guitar Hero game: *Guitar Hero: World Tour*.

Haste The Day and **Gwen Stacy** played a benefit show July 18th at The Music Mill in Indianapolis and raised over $5,400 for the Red Cross to help support those affected by the floods and tornados that struck the state earlier this year. "This whole flood thing has hit really close to us. Both of our hometowns are now disaster areas. Nobody has flood insurance there; everyone has lost everything. We just wanted to do our part."

Renee Yohe, whose story inspired the creation of non-profit To Write Love on Her Arms, releases her memoir, *Purpose For The Pain*. She and co-founder Jamie Tworkowski spoke on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams. "We're talking about problems of pain and we want people to know about the hope and help that exist in the face of these issues. We're told that nine million people will see this story on NBC, so we're obviously thrilled at the idea of so many people being invited into this conversation."

Michael Gungor Band has released its self-produced debut, *Ancient Skies*, after signing with Atlanta-based Brash Music.

The Newfangled Sequence unveiled multiple new songs on its myspace page after a summer of intense recordings.

Integrity Music artist **Lincoln Brewster** will be releasing his new album, *Today Is The Day*.

Based on the success of their free download of *1000 Thoughts Of Violence*, **Kekal** is releasing a full download of their new album, *Acidity*.

Seabird threw a CD release show on a riverboat in the Cincinnati River in

Austrian Death Machine

BY DAVID STAGG

Tim Lambesis is quite the man about town. Last I talked to him, he was in Japan touring to support As I Lay Dying's then latest release *Shadows Are Security*. Last I saw him, I caught the same band on the *Sounds of the Underground* tour in Houston, TX, when they plowed through with juggernauts like GWAR, Cannibal Corpse, and Black Dahlia Murder – and AILD was the headliner. But now that I'm talking to him again, we're not even talking about that same band anymore. Lambesis is doing a number of interviews surrounding his side project, Austrian Death Machine, a thrash-death-metal-comedy band in which he plays all the instruments. If you've heard it, you'll know it's exactly how he described it: "death metal comedy." But for those of you who haven't – or didn't even know Lambesis was in a side project – he's here to let you know it's not exactly what you'd expect.

So give me the basics: What prompted you to start a side project?
Everything with As I Lay Dying is serious and passionate at the same time for me. But that's only one side of my personality. Every once in while, I want to do something that's not quite that deep, something a little more light-hearted. This is that creative type of outlet. The music is still very aggressive and energetic, but it's a release for me.

Where do you find the time? Has it been a strain on AILD?
No, but I have a studio at my house; recording is really easy. The writing process came pretty naturally--this is what I grew up listening to, a little more thrash. That's what's fun about it. With As I Lay Dying, we think through all the details... There are some instinctual moments, but for the most part it's very ironed out. (With ADM), there is no one else to collaborate with; it's a lot more instinctual.

What do you think people are expecting when they hear about your side project and what do you feel you're delivering?
I think people expect the music to be sub par, not quite as good as a real band. They usually expect more of an artsy outlet. That's why it's a side project. I think I'm breaking side project stereotypes. I think it's recorded well; it sounds good. Even though it is spontaneous, I hope to break some stereotypes on that level. Lyrically and thematically, people don't expect a comedy-related metal album to come from me. I'm looking forward to surprising some people with that.

support of their new album, '*Till We See The Shore*. Videos are up on YouTube now.

Sparrow Records has uncovered hundreds of hours of the late **Keith Green**'s unreleased live concert recordings, videos, teachings, photos, and previously unheard songs in *The Live Experience* compilation.

My Epic released their full-length debut with Dreamt Music/Facedown Records, *I Am Undone*.

Agraceful has posted several songs off its Sumerian Records debut album, *The Great I Am*, on their myspace page.

House of Heroes' *The End Is Not The End*, received a #1 radio hit single and over one million plays on their myspace page.

Pop/rock artist **Brooke Barrettsmith** has put together a road journal for her fans, available on her website, Facebook, and YouTube.

Independent pop/punk band, **Alakrity**, released their new, full-length album, *Whatever Happened To Good TV?* with a special guest appearance from **Petra**'s **John Schlitt**.

The Agency for the Performing Arts announced the signing of Rounder Records' recording band **Ten Shekel Shirt**.

Maylene & The Sons Of Disaster were nominated for "Best New Artist" for VMA Awards Show on MTV. Maylene is nominated for the video "Darkest Of Kin."

Inhale/Exhale debuted their video for "It's Myself vs. Being a Man" on MTV's *Headbanger's Ball* this August. "The whole theme is about betrayal and broken promises, same as the album. As a whole the video is dark, but beautifully dark," said guitarist **John LaRussa**.

Family Force 5's *Dance Or Die* had explosive first-week sales totaling 12,989.

HARDNEWS
Page twelve

Enough Already!

BY JAMIE LEE RAKE

Maybe I should've pitched Our Van Pelt on reviewing **NICOLE C. MULLEN**'s latest for the main of this mag. That's because about two-thirds of *A Dream To Believe In, Volume 2* (Word) establishes La Nicole as a (black) rock chick extraodinaire. Think Labelle, En Vogue, Michelle Ndegeocello, Grace Jones and Tina Turner at their gnarliest, only plenty godlier. Ow! Recalling a distaff Bill Withers with folkie soul, she's sweet, too. Sorta' universalist (?) titular downtempo piece and closing rave/hoedown/raga experiment don't diminish *Dream* much. Would it be untoward to ask if she has a single sister?

****

SHAWN McDONALD's folkiness has served him well for several years now. But *Roots Remixed* (Sparrow, digital only) proves a couple things: 1) if he's never been listed opposite John Mayer on one of those Christian-to-not RIYL comparison charts, McDonald has it coming vocally, but not badly; and 2) his already looped, backbeat-ish acoustic thang works delightfully plunged whole hog into electronic atmospherics recalling The Postal Service and Ani DiFranco's outre' side. But would he play these six tracks live? (ShawnMcDonaldMusic.com)

****

Yay for holy hip-hop vets **GRITS** on getting their own label after nigh 15 years in the game. Give 'em kudos, too, for continuing to savvily balance underground cred and complexity with utterly commercial hookery. Coffee and Bonafide likewise get chutzpah points for having their previous company's boss, TobyMac, on one song. But *Reiterate* (Revolution Art) suffers from some guest star bloating. Now that they've re-established themselves, I've my fingers crossed for a leaner, fiercer Grits next time out. (Grits7.com)

****

Speaking of 'Mac, he signed a winner in **AYIESHA WOODS**. On her sophmore outing, *Love Like This* (Gotee), she comes off like the missing sister of *Arrested Development* alumni Dionne Farris: catchy, rocky alt r&b, sober but smiling. That said, maybe it's the production's patina of cCm slickness and/or wishing she'd get vulnerably confessional ala' Lauryn Hill, but methinks Woods has it in her to surprise as much as she already pleases.

****

Indulge me in boasting over some of my home state's talent, yes? **THE KAL BERGENDAHL PROJECT** originate from a praise & worship school in Kenosha, and specialize in smooth jazz of soulfulness and imagination enough to excel beyond Kenny G/Najee glop. Their one adult-contempo' ballad masters the genre well enough to give MercyMe a run at their general market position, too. Miss Koinonia? Not feeling Ben Tankard? KBP's *Everlasting Life* should sate your fusion jazz hunger dandily. (MySpace.com/KalBProject)

****

Send. More. Music. NOW! Ship it with love and hope that I'll enjoy it to: P.O. Box 29; Waupun, WI 53963 U.S.A. Until next time, don't do anything that would embrarrass me around you, OK?

News bullets

The Devil Wears Prada recently announced their signing with Ferret Music. They'll be joining Underoath and Saosin on a US tour through November.

Seabird's hit song "Rescue" has been selected by ABC to promote its new season of *Pushing Daisies*.

Run Kid Run launched a contest calling all marching bands to submit their band to perform with Run Kid Run during the song "One In A Million."

Lionsgate has teamed up with Clear Channel to give unsigned artists the opportunity to have their song featured in *The Punisher: War Zone* movie. One Grand Prize winner will have their song featured in the movie and included on the soundtrack album.

Call To Preserve have posted new songs from their forthcoming *From Isolation* on their myspace page.

Brian "Head" Welch is launching a promo tour to celebrate the release of his debut solo album, *Save Me From Myself*, as well as his book of the same title, which has sold over 70,000 copies since its release, and *Washed By Blood*. The latter is an edited paperback version of *Save Me From Myself* aimed at a younger audience and doesn't contain the profanity and gory details of the original version.

Relient K is launching its 25-date *Uncle Fest Tour* in October, which will also include Ludo, This Providence and **House of Heroes**. In between tours, the band is recording three new tracks – "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "Silver Bells" and "Oh Holy Night" – for the reissue of its 2007 Christmas collection, *Let It Snow Baby...Let It Reindeer*.

Stars Go Dim will be releasing its long awaited 5-song EP on October 21. This is the side-project band of **Pillar**'s **Michael "Kalel" Wittig** and **Lester Estelle**, and **Joey Avalos**, along with **Chris Cleveland**.

Zao is recording its new album with **Tim Lambesis** for a 2009 Ferret release.

Cont'd on page 63. Read lots more in-depth and current news at hmmag.com

LIVE REPORT

Purple Door 2008
August 15 - 16

BY DOUG VAN PELT

LEWISBERRY, PA – The annual Purple Door Festival is a nice way to cap off the summer. They stack a bunch of high-quality bands onto three stages in a short day-and-a-half festival that rocks without wearing your body down like a sun-soaked sponge.

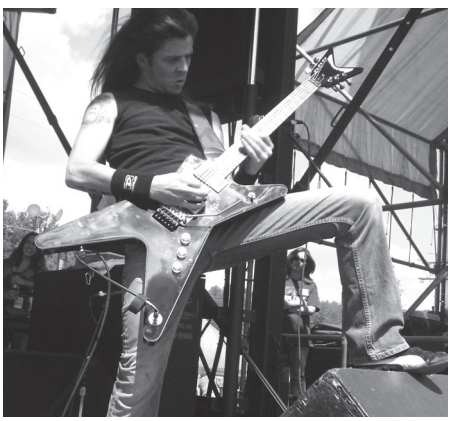
Friday night's Main Stage featured some choice sets by **Red** and **Skillet**. The latter had an impressive light show that lit up the night sky with an almost strobe-like frequency. The smoke, of course, makes the colored lights "pop" more. While some of their songs lost some of the dynamic "oomph!" due to the open-air environment that sometimes swallows up high and mid-range frequencies, the energy and punch of tunes like "Better Than Drugs" and "Savior" still comes through, though slightly muffled. The lead-off track, "Rebirthing," probably sounded the best, with its gothic intro and trade-off vocals.

On Saturday **Gwen Stacy** took the HM Magazine stage by storm and proceeded to pummel it with enormous riffs and pounding drums and screaming for 40 minutes straight. **Inhale Exhale** came on after a long lunch break, applying the 90 mph energy boost that the hard music fans desperately wanted more of after a morning of intensity with the likes of heavyweights **Neocracy** and **Oh, Sleeper**. It's amazing how much dust a stomping, moshing crowd will kick up.

The Showdown sported its current four-piece lineup with one guitarist, and the band sounded as tight and heavy as ever. While still acting playful between songs, there was less talk this set than previous shows by the band, as they let the ripping music do the talking (and shredding, and destruction). **Haste The Day** played lots of old songs, which they just killed. There were lots of wiggling fingers in the air at times – egging on the guitar solos. The Gwen Stacy guys came on stage during one song and helped bring three extra gang vocals. It was cool to see them all over the place – one behind the drumset, one at stage left and one at stage right. **August Burns Red** headlined the HM Magazine stage like the conquering local favorites that they were. Unassuming and almost nonchalant, they quietly set up and then unleashed their technical yet simple and brutal metal on a crowd that was eating it up.

The Gallery Stage always sports some great acoustic-driven talent, and this year didn't disappoint. It was a great joy to catch **Denison Witmer** and **Derek Webb**, who played back-to-back sets that were fabulous. Witmer's voice just floated above his guitar with a quiet melodic quality that was almost breathtaking. He played one of his new ones, called "Carry The Weight," which was almost arresting in its beauty. Derek Webb played his acoustic guitar with skill, telling an occasional tale and funny anecdote, like how the song "Name" was played on an episode of *Grey's Anatomy*, "a long scene featuring two doctors fornicating, which wasn't anywhere near what the song was written about." His devil-may-care attitude and his wavering invitation to "imagine, no, don't imagine ... the scene" was pretty fun to experience.

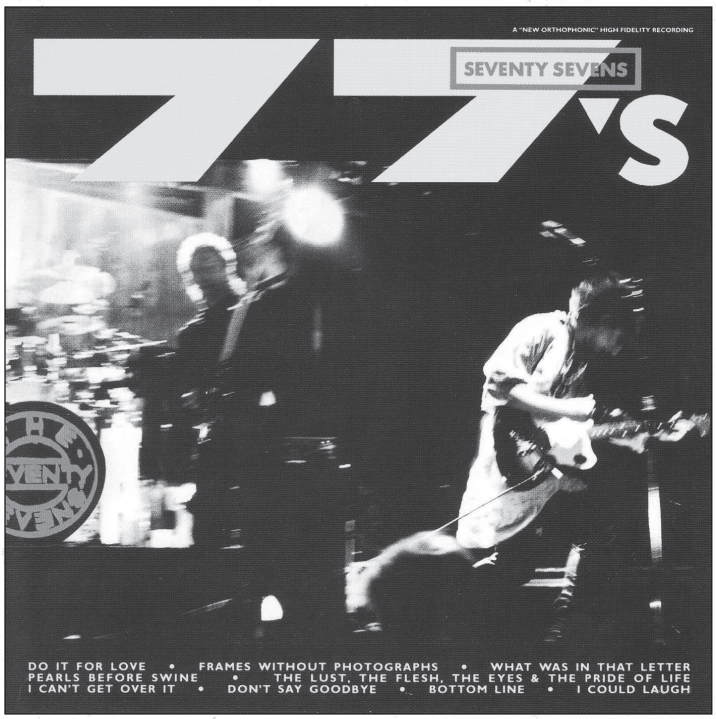
We Shot The Moon brought is piano rock with gusto on the Main Stage. **Disciple** rocked it up really well once darkness had fallen. Their new players all synced up well together, carrying the energy and punch you'd expect from the melodic metal/whatever-style-it-is-they-play band. The two guitarists blend some distinct styles together, both wailing away and bending notes at times and other times trading off between rhythms and leads. The band played the groove-heavy title track off their upcoming new album. **Emery** ended the night on a high note, but not before mixing it up visually by storming the stage clad in sequin-adorned Mexican wrestling masks. Wow. Good times, for sure.



Clockwise from top: Jake Luhrs from August Burns Red; Haste The Day's Steven Keech; Ryland Raus of Inhale Exhale; Derek Webb; and The Showdown's Josh Childers. [Photos by Doug Van Pelt] See more in-depth review at the Editor's blog at hmmag.com

Classic Moments in Christian Rock history

BY RAYDON RAVEN & DOUG VAN PELT


A "NEW ORTHOPHONIC" HIGH FIDELITY RECORDING
SEVENTY SEVENS
77's
DO IT FOR LOVE • FRAMES WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHS • WHAT WAS IN THAT LETTER
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE • THE LUST, THE FLESH, THE EYES & THE PRIDE OF LIFE
I CAN'T GET OVER IT • DON'T SAY GOODBYE • BOTTOM LINE • I COULD LAUGH

ZAO

Where Blood And Fire Bring Rest

[1998 | Solid State]

The band that helped found metalcore.

In 1998 I was a junior in high school, I hated the world and hated Christianity even more, but I played the games and put on the masks anyway and acted like a good little Christian. Until I happened upon this album. This brutal, unbridled beast of an album. Here was an album that sounded as angry and frustrated as I felt, but at the same time talked openly and realistically about death, pain, agony, mourning, betrayal, and how screwed up Christianity has become. It showed me that Christianity isn't and doesn't have to be the syrupy sweet, happy-face masked, hypocritical, disingenuous bull that gets sprayed around. And that really struck a chord with the underground, those of us fed up with youth group and summer camps. Those distorted riffs, the raspy growl that Dan is now infamous for, the barely controlled frustration and raging undertones, *Where Blood And Fire*... almost never ceases to blow my mind. It was raw, brutally honest, rebellious, and was one of the hardest albums I have ever heard. And I still listen to it regularly. Plus, it was made before Brett Detar went all teary-eyed and acoustic on us.

[Posted by RaydonRaven at hmforums.com]

77's

Seventy Sevens

[1987 | Island]

Missed it by that much!

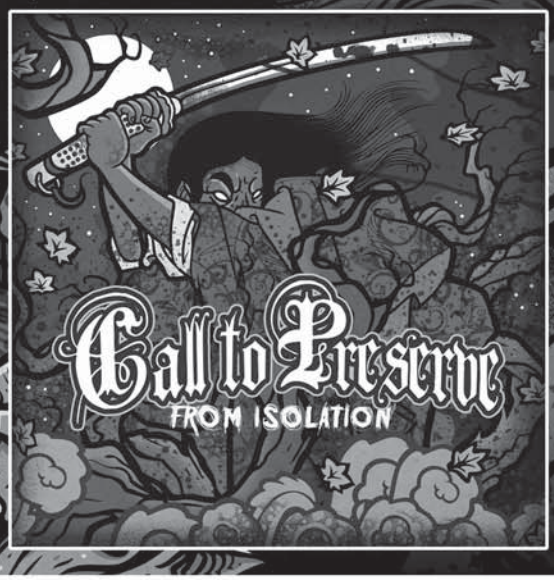
It was one of those first moments when Christian rock was going to be noticed by the world; where these albums (and the brand new format of its time, compact discs) would be sold side-by-side in retail music stores. Two artists from Exit Records were picked up by Island Records, putting Charlie Peacock and 77s albums in the "P" and "S" sections of said stores (instead of the "Religious," "Christian" or "Gospel" racks). Yes, us Christian music fans were salivating and anticipating how the entire world would now awaken to the brilliant art of "our" artists. For the 77s, their major label marketing push would have to wait just a little bit, while another album in the label's catalog would release, blow up and become one of rock's all-time classic albums (U2's *The Joshua Tree*); which effectively nixed the best-laid *Seventy Sevens* plans from Island's retail, radio and press departments. The greatest tunes from Sacramento residents Mike Roe, Aaron Smith, Mark Tootle, and Jan Eric would never get the attention it deserved. Amateur pundits still sometimes debate the what if's about how a great song like "The Lust, The Flesh, The Eyes & the Pride of Life" might have done if given the proper amount of promotion and label attention. Nevertheless, it stands as one of Christian Alternative Rock's most shining moments.

[Doug Van Pelt]

Look here for a couple classic, genre-changing albums highlighted each issue until we celebrate our 25th Anniversary in July, 2010; where we'll unveil a top-100 list of Christian rock's greatest albums of all time. Let the fighting begin [go to ***hmforums.com***]

Call to Preserve

FROM ISOLATION



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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS

A BUZZWORTHY AND INDEPENDENT ARTIST NAMED JOHN MCENTIRE (WHO HAPPENED TO INTERN AT HM MAGAZINE THIS SUMMER) SHARES THE SPOTLIGHT WITH HIS DESERVING PEERS – ARTISTS HE LIKES, ETC.

JOHN'S BAND IS KNOWN AS:
The Still Life *myspace.com/thestilllife*

Guard Your Steps

Our guitarist Sam goes to Belmont University in Nashville during the school year, and during this past year he branched out a bit with his musical style to help form a technical death metal band. Heavy and brutal, with just the right balance of technicality and melody, Guard Your Steps has been tearing up the Midwest and Southern states. [Photo: Austin Gros]
myspace.com/guardyoursteps

The Flaw and the Prophet

The Flaw and the Prophet is our singer/keyboardist's solo project, which should appeal to fans of Bright Eyes and the Arcade Fire. His upcoming EP, entitled *Post-Garden*, features members of the El Guapos rounding out the sound. Here's what he has to say about it: "The Flaw and the Prophet is an innocent expression of the universal discomfort of humanity, sort of like Brahm's Lullaby in torn underwear. They like parking lot shows, the Pacific low tide, coffee, soulful music, babies, road trips, the Olympics, freedom, large decks, good films, loving company and brushing their teeth. Their friends like them ... will you be their friend?"
myspace.com/theflawandtheprophet

The El Guapos

Indie at its finest. Their latest EP, *Birds. Birds! Birds?*, is full of what we've come to expect from the top of the genre with a distinctly homegrown Austin feel. A great live show rounds out the package. A pleasure to watch, a pleasure to hear, a pleasure to share the stage with, these guys deserve your attention.
myspace.com/theelguaposwillbringbackpluto

Bayta Darell

Bayta Darell is beauty as sound. These incredibly talented musicians craft brilliant experimental (yet accessible) songs that are pensive without being overly moody. They paint sonic landscapes with epic ambient arrangements; incorporating nearly every instrument they can get their hands on.
myspace.com/baytadarell

Hundred Year Storm

Hundred Year Storm is a post-rock masterpiece. More structured and rock oriented, they create their own brand of music void of clichés, yet full of hooks that will keep you constantly wanting more. Known for their creative instrumentals that often utilize old spoken recordings over colorful backdrops.
myspace.com/hundredyearstorm

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK

Faith Factor – *Against A Darkened Sky*
Progressive power metal for fans of Rob Rock, Pyramaze, Sacred Warrior!

Deliverance – s/t:
The 1989 debut release from thrash/speed metal Icons! Digitally remastered, enhanced artwork, featuring 2 bonus tracks and extended liner notes.

Azmaveth – *Strong As Death*
A unique blend of black and death from Puerto Rico. For fans of Ancient, Dimmu Borgir, and Extol.

Grave Robber – *Be Afraid*
For fans of Alice Cooper, Type O Negative, The Misfits and Danzig! Includes industrial remix by Angel of mainstream metal band Dope.

Deliverance – *Weapons of Our Warfare*
1990 speed/thrash metal classic reissue digitally remastered with one bonus track and extended liner notes.

Bealiah – *Anthology of the Undead*
Brutal old-school black metal from Indonesia, for fans of Emperor, Immortal, and Dark Funeral.

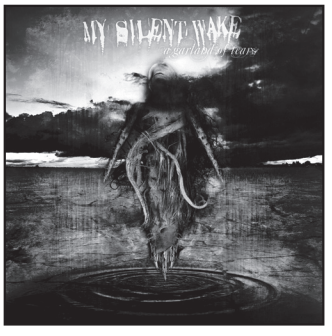
Sympathy – *Anagogic Tyranny*
Brand new album of ultra technical, blackened death from Canada, for fans of Suffocation, Immolation, and Morbid Angel

Holy Blood – *The Patriot*
Brand new third album of folk / pagan metal from the Ukrainian masters, for fans of Finntroll, Ensiferum, Falkenbach, and Eluveitie.

RETROACTIVE RECORDS

His Witness – *Kingdom Come*
Originally recorded at the Elefante's Pakaderm Studio in 1989, remixed by Bill Menchen (Titanic/The Seventh Power).
Features powerful vocals and music for fans of Judas Priest, Whitecross, and Bloodgood!
myspace.com/wearehiswitness

My Silent Wake – *A Garland of Tears*
New album from masters of death/doom/folk arise with a whirlwind of dark metal for fans of Paramaecium and My Dying Bride.



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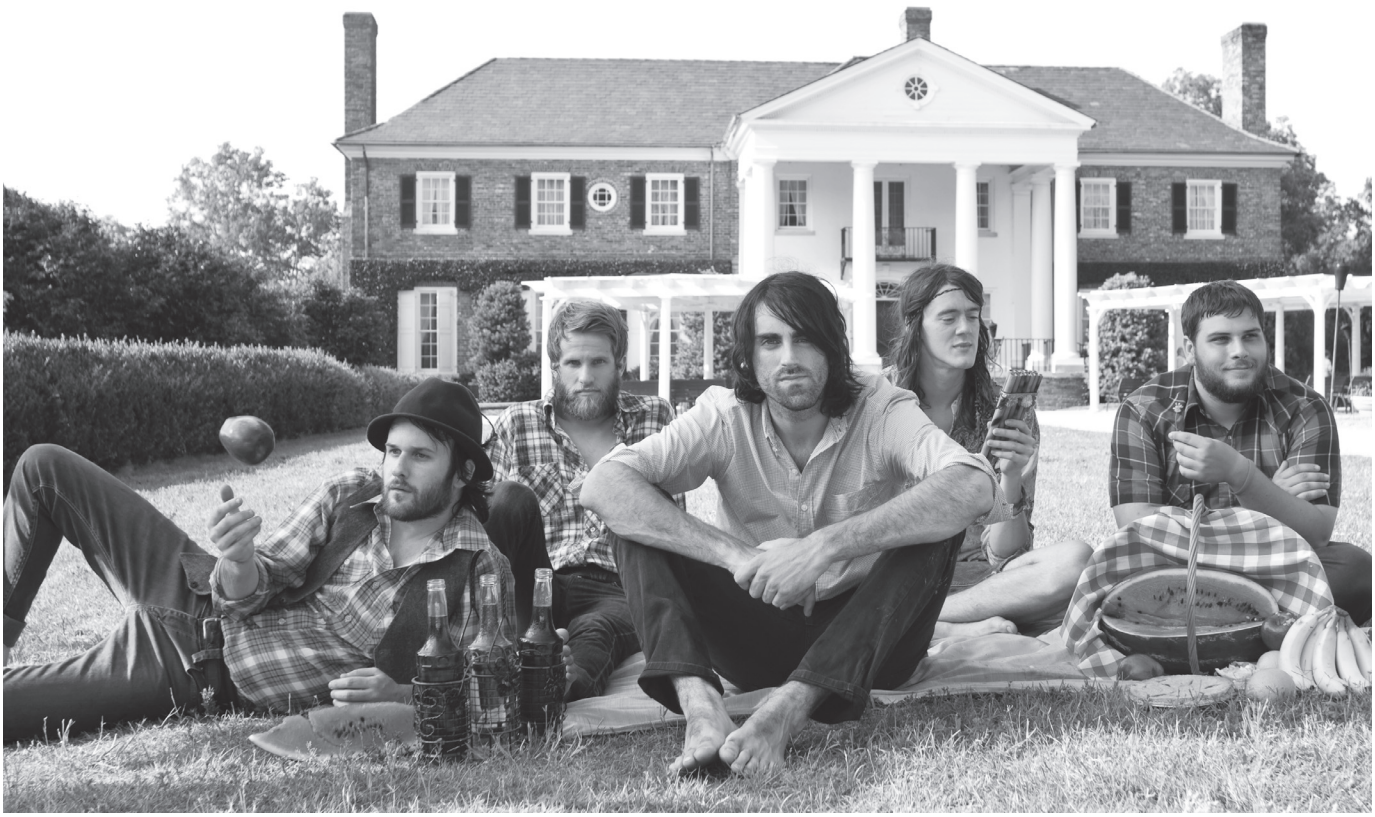
JONEZETTA



BY LEVI MACALLISTER

"Character: Guy who invents silent Velcro buys mansion with no furniture. Absolutely perfect." The irony and social commentary in Zach Braff's *Garden State* might be one of the best testimonies to the wonder of how easily the most ridiculous nonsense somehow sells as unfoundedly profitable. That, and the fact that Ronnie Day can sell radio hits about how the room smells like crying.

With one album already under their belts, vocalist Robert Chisolm gives his assurances that Jonezetta's *Cruel To Be Young* is no such monster. "I didn't want for anyone to be able to tell that there was a formula … I just wanted it to be surprising … more of 'Wow, what are they doing? I don't even understand this.'"

And it's true; the new record takes on an entirely different tone – contrasting their thickly pop-based debut with an album more musically influenced by the Beatles, Wilco and Weezer. What started out as a mere hobby for these Mississippi boys quickly blew up with a little push of encouragement from As Cities Burn manager, Ryan Rado. Now, heavily inspired by two-years' worth of relentless touring, Jonezetta's follow-up with Tooth & Nail takes a refreshing, yet signature approach to their sound. "It's kind of different … in a way, it's all over the place, and that's kind of why I called it *Cruel To Be Young*. Everything is all over the place for me right now, especially pop-culture-wise. And that's sort of what the last record was – a play on pop culture and what people think is cool currently. And it's all kind of a joke. *Cruel To Be Young* kind of came from the idea of … I don't even know what sells, what doesn't sell, you do this, you do that…"

This new record has also provided the band with an opportunity to lament. Just before the release of *Popularity*, the band suffered the loss of keyboard/guitarist Timothy Jordan II. "When we recorded *Popularity*, we basically drove from his funeral to – well, no, not basically – we literally drove from his funeral to the studio in Nashville and we immediately started recording this *super*, super pop dance record... So I kind of had to block that out of my mind and do that record, and this was more of, trying to embrace it, figure it out. Trying to get my head around it in some kind of way."

The musicianship and progression shows not only in each track's unique character, but the set as whole. "I think a reason why it sounds so different is because we stopped using samples … we tried using real drums. Which is weird. Which is different, which is also weird. Why wouldn't you just use the real drums? We actually spent time on the way it sounds. You know, like how a guitar makes you feel."

Regarding his opinion of "music as ministry" and quick judgments as to whether Jonezetta is on par with a critic's inclination, Robert had one word to say: "Terrified. It scares me, people who judge based upon things that I'm supposed to be doing… I think we all just try to do the best that we can. I find God in so many more things than just the 'Christian music industry.'"

With two new members (keyboardist Tyler Kemp; drummer Alex Warren), street dates set for Sept. 16th, tour in progress, and a beautiful album about "life, God, and the what-have-you's", Jonezetta is ready to hit the ground running. "I like where we are and what we've accomplished, and it's been an interesting ride so far."

jonezetta.com

wrapping our head around it

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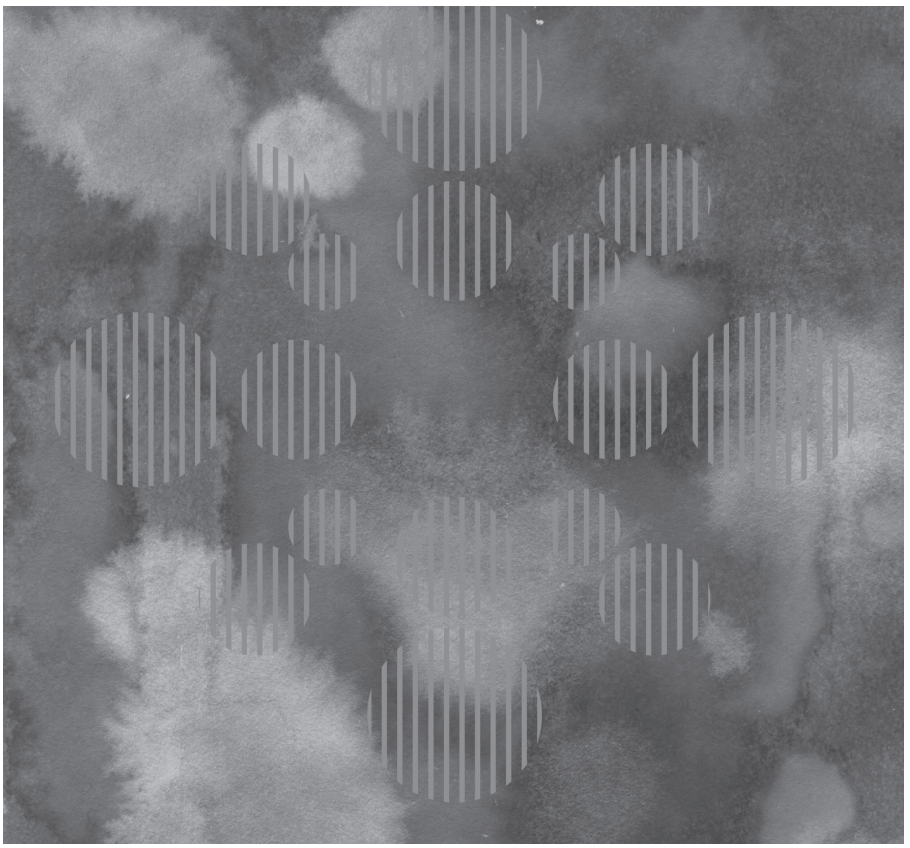
TRENCHES



BY LEVI MACALLISTER

I was so nervous to get up on stage! I remember the first show with Trenches… I literally, um, had butterflies and I almost peed my pants…

Jimmy Ryan is a tough man to track down. After (and I count) nine emails, three phone calls, and two weeks post-deadline, I finally tried one last time, maybe more to humor myself, and he answered.

Go figure.

Turns out, he's probably one of the kindest, most soft-spoken people I've ever held a conversation with, and so begins the drilling…

"To be honest there's no story … you can print that. It was just kind of the age-old dilemma of: there's so many band names that are cool … what are we gonna use? My friend said, 'Man, I like the name Trenches.' And I was like, '[I'm] using it.'" A band that began as a hobby and means for creative outflow, the new experimental hardcore project from the old Haste the Day frontman has been eagerly anticipated since rumors started hitting chat forums, and once the official news came out, conversation exploded. In the words of one such die-hard, "God! It's good to hear that scream again!" With influences that spawn from Isis, Deftones, and Cult of Luna to the likes of Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd, Trenches "never set out to do anything, to be honest. It was just a group of friends setting out to make music. It just kind of all fell together to where Solid State decided to put it out."

For fans more lyrically inclined, hopefully you can tune your ears to Jimmy's growling vocals. "There's not lyrics in the booklet … there's not lyrics anywhere, actually… And there's no, like, reason. There's no ... well, we want kids to guess. Not everyone in the band is a Christian. Everything that I do in my life, hopefully, reflects the character of Jesus Christ. So, there are lyrics on the record that are spiritual. The band has never set out to be an evangelistic band, but there is a spiritual undertone to everything on the record. But by no means do I think that making music for art or ministry is better. I think that we were just getting together because I missed being creative."

As a previous full time traveling musician, and now an A&R for Tooth & Nail records, Jimmy Ryan has seen a lot, and Lord knows it's not all glamour. "I remember people coming up to me and saying, 'Dude, what's it like now that you've made it?' And I would say to them, 'Well man, now that I've made it, I eat Ramen noodles every day. I live in a van, and I never get to see my [girlfriend].' That's what making it's like… If you're in a band and you're wanting to make it your job, you need to be sure it's really what you feel like you're supposed to do. If you're questioning it, go to college."

"The reason why I quit Haste the Day is because, for at least the first year of marriage, I just wanted to be at home and concentrate on my marriage, so that we'd have a solid foundation." Now, with Jimmy and his wife expecting their first child, Trenches isn't going to be one of those crazy tour-a-lot's, so get your fill when you can. "I really, really like being at home. Ha! I like being at home with my wife. All of us have good full time jobs, and some of us have families … this is just really a way for us to be creative as musicians."

myspace.com/trenchesofficial

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Album reviews

23 ALBUMS 51 ENTERTAINMENT 50 BOOKS & GADGETS

HASTE THE DAY

DREAMER

Haste the Day knows how to write a record. They've come strong ever since their debut release Burning Bridges – and what may be even more impressive is that despite a number of member changes (including the replacement of former vocalist Jimmy Ryan), with Dreamer they've still put out the solid HTD record you're looking for.

The conventional Haste the Day tracks are on there: The kick-off track "68" is a quick burst of a song that brings classic metal guitar riffs, some melodic singing, and a slick breakdown that is sure to get your blood pumping. The song is a good song – I wouldn't say it's great – but its importance lies in that it sets you up for the whole record. And in the scope of the album, it plays that part well. This is what HTD has managed to do throughout *Dreamer*: string together the classic HTD song feel with some new uncharted territory to evolve the band. I'm loving songs like "Resolve" – an older song from back in the day they re-wrote and updated – that go straight from singing over chords to a half-time feel before beating you with a nasty breakdown that hits you like bullets from a machine gun.

It's also interesting to hear songs like "Labyrinth", a self-proclaimed "grandiose and ominous song unlike anything the band has recorded before." They're right: It's not a typical HTD song. It has the same kind of feel as the instrumental tracks in Underoath's *Define the Great Line* and seems to serve the same purpose: Break up the album, give the listener a breath, but keep the ambience of the record in tact. It does a good job, but it's probably not going to be a song you jump to on the track list when you kick the record on.

Haste the Day does an incredible job of songwriting, and with their technical skill and relentless breakdowns, *Dreamer* is definitely a record you need to pick up. For any fans of Haste the Day's previous work, and for newcomers as well. ~~[SOLID STATE] DAVID STAGG~~

Rating system

05 *CLASSIC*
04 *FABULOUS*
03 *SOLID*
02 *SUSPECT*
01 *AMISS*
***** *1/2*

EMERY

WHILE BROKEN HEARTS PREVAIL

It's tough to peg down Emery in a limited number of words. *While Broken Hearts Prevail*, their new EP, sounds like one band at the start, a nearly different band by the end, but somehow the same band throughout. If that sounds confusing, well, it sorta is. Is it necessarily bad? Nope. It's an answer that's a testament to the overall quality of the band's aesthetic. "The Smile, The Face" comes roaring out of the gate to start things off, full of impassioned vocals, screams, a huge chorus, and a weirdly endearing song structure. As you listen the EP slowly morphs from the emo-ish dual singing/screamo formula into a more traditional singy style. The band knows it's way around a chorus, which is the most unifying aspect throughout the record. Overall, the best thing about *While Broken Hearts Prevail* isn't one or two particulars, rather that everything is where it needs to be, when it needs to be there – an attribute that every band should strive for. ~~[TOOTH & NAIL] MIKE HOGAN~~

DISCIPLE

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Modern Southern rock is almost an oxymoron – or at least it sometimes should be. Proud Tennessee natives Disciple mistakenly teeters between loud arena-ready rock and redundant bar sludge. Unfortunately, the latter occurs more than the former and the Dixie band's newest album, *Southern Hospitality,* is infected with grumbling vocals and heavy drawn out riffs that overbear the scarce times the songs manage to truly soar and give a taste worse than watered-down sweet tea. ~~[INO] DAN FRAZIER~~

HOUSE OF HEROES

THE END IS NOT THE END

Luckily, House of Heroes has properly demonstrated they know how to play. Otherwise, the band trying to hold as many sonic cards in its hand as they do on *The End is Not The End* would result in certain disaster. From acoustic gems to grinding riffs, the Columbus band's latest is instead its magnum opus – a risky play to go all-in and watch it pay off in spades. "If" bounces out of the gate with a summery pop-punk-meets-alt-rock pondering "if you were mine…" over and over again. The harmonies and round of the bridge evoke pop tendencies of decades gone by and proves HOH knows its musical history. Following a poppier Muse-ish side, "In The Valley of the Dying Sun" rides Tim Skipper's falsetto atop roller-coaster, ethereal synth work and drudging riffs that appear from time to time. "Faces" succeeds as an infectious and triumphant modern-rock track that features Skipper at his best. "Field of Daggers" reveals an epic display of poise and searing riffs, boldly declaring the coming of God's kingdom as loudly as the early Christians longed for it. Song after song, it's the same story of the now four-piece meeting every ounce of its potential. ~~[MONO VS. STEREO] MATT CONNER~~

ABANDON

S/T EP

What starts out as "raise your hands and clap along" pop/rock morphs throughout the course of the EP into what could appropriately be described as a worship album. "Be Alive In Me" humbly offers up "the things that hold me down" and asks, "Jesus, can you teach me how to stand … I'm Yours forever." The band began as a worship act and branched out with musical style comparable to Franz Ferdinand or U2. And their ministry is evident. "Help me to come to your throne. It's in your atmosphere, your spirit is here. I can't explain this moment…" ("Atmosphere") With potential to become something of a Hillsong United influence, introducing upbeat and unheard praise, this largely family based band expresses its purpose best, "It's an electric pulse you can't escape." ("Providence") As vocalist Josh Engler says, "Healing happens when you're in the presence of God." It's beautiful abandon. ~~[FOREFRONT] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

TRENCHES

THE TIDE WILL SWALLOW US WHOLE

Trenches pulls no punches with their debut, *The Tide Will Swallow Us Whole*, but those expecting another Haste the Day-esque outfit from the newly returned Jimmy Ryan are in for a surprise. This time around, Ryan and Co. bring an entirely different musical expression to the table. Having much more in common with atmospheric metal bands Neurosis and Cult of Luna than the melodic metalcore sound that gave Ryan his start, Trenches crafts complex mid-tempo soundscapes that take the listener on a powerful, yet pensive, emotional journey. Displaying a caliber of musicianship that surpasses many of its contemporaries, the album is a cohesive expression, flowing from the first note to the last almost seamlessly. Combining moody guitar leads over dense chords and grooves, *The Tide Will Swallow Us Whole* takes a few listens to fully understand musically, but is a breath of fresh air, adding artistry to the too often static metal scene. ~~[SOLID STATE] JOHN MCENTIRE~~

BEFORE THEIR EYES

THE DAWN OF MY DEATH

Before Their Eyes' self-titled debut album painted a sloppy montage of screamo, dirty rock, and metalcore. Their second album, *The Dawn Of My Death*, does more of the same. As if scared to be written off as just another falsetto-fronted post-emo rock act, the Ohio fivesome incorporate random hardcore breakdowns and finger friendly shredding intros. The interspersed sections conclusively appear inappropriate and even annoying. Luckily, the band did seem to focus on one sound as a core: melodically upbeat (even sometimes danceable) soaring rock. ~~[RISE] DAN FRAZIER~~

COOL HAND LUKE

THE SLEEPING HOUSE

With *The Sleeping House*, Cool Hand Luke delivers the kind of mature, modern rock record that suggests they've been paying attention during their decade-long career, and four previous outings. Of course the band's bio finds central creative force Mark Nicks (who sings, plays piano/keys and drums) in the midst of the usual indie band melodrama – record label failures, prematurely disbanding, burnt skin and grafting, reunion tour to fans' delight. As such, *The Sleeping House*, produced by Matt Goldman, has been in a holding pattern for over 18 months, something a band that quotes Col. 3:3 would more than likely take in stride. Still, for all their desire not to "grieve like the world (from 'Eye of the Storm')," CHL has produced a brooding, introspective disc even when they want to proclaim that "God is good all the time." Of course, that isn't any less true just because you admit that life is difficult, and that the cliches and easy answers fail to satisfy. But, it's true that we can't "Buy the Truth," and this house may just be haunted. ~~[LUJO] BRIAN QUINCY NEWCOMB~~

Ratings

	DV	Writer
Emery *While Broken Hearts Prevail* EP	04	04
Disciple *Southern Hospitality*	04	02*
House Of Heroes *The End Is Not The End*	04	04
Abandon *S/T* EP	03*	04
Trenches *The Tide Will Swallow Us Whole*	04	03*
Before Their Eyes *The Dawn Of My Death*	03*	03*
Cool Hand Luke *The Sleeping House*	04	03
Head *Save Me From Myself*	03	03*
Above The Golden State *S/T*	03	04
The Years Gone By *Fortever Comes Too Soon*	03	
My Epic *I Am Undone*	03*	05
Saints Never Surrender *Brutus*	03*	03
Before there was Rosalyn *As Far as the Moon From the Sun*	03	03*
In Aviate *1985*	03*	04
Call To Preserve *From Isolation*	03*	03
Lovedrug *The Sucker Punch Show*	04	04*

HEAD

SAVE ME FROM MYSELF

When Brian "Head" Welch left Korn and his drug-abusing past to become a missionary for Jesus Christ back in 2005, he promised to release a Christian album soon thereafter. But that didn't happen – the nu-metal guitarist was too busy getting baptized in the Jordan River, building orphanages in India and promoting his autobiography *Save Me From Myself*. Now, three and a half years after traveling around the world to renovate poverty-stricken neighborhoods, Head has finally come full circle to unveil his solo debut, which is coincidentally titled after his book and heavily influenced after his life's story. The iconic musician doesn't stray far from the nu-metal foundation that earned Korn success as the album is musically reflective between the time period of 1997's *Follow The Leader* and 2002's *Untouchables*. That whole aura is perfectly captured in "Flush," which depicts the guitarist kicking the habit and gaining control of his life. In what becomes a theme for *Save Me From Myself*, Head makes an example out of himself by using Christianity as his weapon of choice to overcome his inner demons. Although Head isn't known for his vocals, his singing and screaming is impressive for a musician who has been hidden behind a guitar for most of his career. While his rookie mic skills are uneasy on trepid efforts like "Money" and "Shake," the nu-metal hero takes a bold step forward. After three and a half years, it took him long enough. ~~[DRIVEN MUSIC GROUP] BEAR FRAZER~~

ABOVE THE GOLDEN STATE

S/T

"The West Coast pop/rock" of Above the Golden State is akin to a less-creative Switchfoot, although that's not a knock. After all, the San Diego boys have been at it for quite some time. Instead, the latest Sparrow Records act prove themselves worthy of such lofty comparisons with a surprisingly strong debut. "Loud and Clear" is just that, initializing an energetic release with Michael Watson's falsetto atop perfect radio-rock guitar work. "Comeback" features thunderous drums that hurriedly introduce multiple electric guitars, finally giving way to a completely infectious chorus a la Goo Goo Dolls; the song should receive radio play in similar formats. The strings buoying album closer "Real to Reel" solidify ATGS's debut and serve to bring the audience back for another listen. It's the perfect ending for a band trying to make their mark for a higher cause, and here they largely succeed. ~~[SPARROW] MATT CONNER~~

THE YEARS GONE BY

FOREVER COMES TOO SOON

Cookie cutter rock bands come swiftly down the pike these days, but The Years Gone By will surely satisfy that sweet tooth craving for all things Relient K, Nevertheless, Green Day, and even a little Cartel, Boys Like Girls and other such small sentences substituted for band names. But darn if they don't sound really sharp, melodic and frenetic doing it. ~~[RISE] DOUG VAN PELT~~

MY EPIC

I AM UNDONE

To call this new Facedown release anything short of beautiful would be downright wrong. This indie trio has developed an album that passionately delivers a sound that few bands can muster, and the maturity of their art is apparent from the very beginning. From chants of C.S. Lewis quotes in the prologue to Jeremiah Austin's earnest conclusion, "Oh, my God! I am not, but you are!" the attitude of worship, humility, and painful honesty is enough to strip you to the core as you get lost in the emotion and sing along to this "poet's praise" ("Communion"). With raw and powerful vocals, honest, heart-wrenching lyrics, and melodies placed perfectly to stir up the same emotion within the listener that Austin describes in his circumstance, this band is perhaps the most unique on Facedown's list to date. My Epic is, well…epic. (You knew that was coming.) ~~[FACEDOWN] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

SAINTS NEVER SURRENDER

BRUTUS

For those of you that have followed the progress of Saints Never Surrender since their days playing generator stages at C-Stone Festival, you're about to get kicked in the face. With *Brutus*, their premier release after signing to Blood and Ink records, they've done well to capture that stage-presence energy. After a melodic introduction, "This Moment" pounds in with gang-vocals screaming, "I will walk with pride!" and Tony Biard's heartfelt vocals belting a testament to aspiration and attaining your dreams, asking "What good is process without passion?" And passion they deliver, loud and fast, through an ever-maturing hardcore sound spiced with everything from punk-feel tempos to a uniquely mellow mix of screams and keys, it's evident that the boys from Saints Never Surrender have "not been constrained by this mediocrity" ("The Quest") that so often floods their genre. ~~[BLOOD & INK] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

BEFORE THERE WAS ROSALYN

AS FAR AS THE MOON FROM THE SUN

Oftentimes bands aren't incredibly straightforward with their lyrics. You get this sort of in-between stage where the message could be one thing but really you make it whatever you make it and relate how you want to relate. Not so with BTWR. These are personal. These are gut wrenching. From dealing with the pain of abusive relationships, "Prepubescent dreams of family … what you came to steal beneath the sheets I choke when I remember," ("A Shadow of Things We Know") to incorporating a well known worship song, "I could sing of Your love forever…" ("They Laughed At Jules Verne, Too"), *As Far as the Moon From the Sun* is a super heavy album whose metallic sound screams out in humble passion and reverence. Glimpses of drum-machine digitalization ("A Rhetoric in Writing") add a touch of experimentalism, and singing amongst the cries latch on with melodious completion. ~~[HOLDFAST RECORDS] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

IN AVIATE

1985

In Aviate's lead vocalist (Ryan Randall) carries a high pitched wail that falters into a falsetto so well, he could be a stand-in for Circa Survive's Anthony Green. Luckily for Randall, his four fellow bandmates suffice the musical talent as well. Intricate guitar structures orchestrate together sonic melodic frenzies – sometimes even as frantic as Thrice or Dredg. While the obvious influences might be too apparent for some (such as the not-so-subtle token screams), the superb result should hush any haters. ~~[RISE] DAN FRAZIER~~

CALL TO PRESERVE

FROM ISOLATION

With a name based upon an accidental misquote of a scripture reference that calls us to perseverance, Call To Preserve has moved on up the ranks from their start in 2003, their self-released EP in 2005, their contract with Strike First in 2006, and now their debut with Facedown, *From Isolation*. While maintaining precedence in the hardcore category, CTP's latest release delivers a definite "anthem" feel throughout, and frantic energy combined with grinding, low riffs that nearly match the vocalist's deep spewing on humility and brokenness give invite to participation. Unfortunately, despite the band's signature creative aggression, "maintaining precedence" is as far as *From Isolation* goes. It's difficult to critique an artist's canvas without the risk of discrediting the work, especially when so much paint and color has been dedicated to creating the final product. In the end, though, this one might not further CTP's climb up the ladder. ~~[FACEDOWN] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

LOVEDRUG

THE SUCKER PUNCH SHOW

Michael and Co. have done it again with *The Sucker Punch Show*. Shepard's gorgeous vocals are piercing as ever and stretched beyond previous ability, and the lyrical maturity is increasingly evident – a feat thought impossible after the depth portrayed in *Everything Starts Where it Ends* – addressing everything from frustrating religious impotence ("Everyone Needs a Halo") to expressions of love for his "baby girl" ("Blood Like"). With a quieter overtone than their last two releases, Lovedrug capitalizes on tantalizing keys ("Panicked Witness") and dreamlike melodies ("Dying Days") while maintaining the catchy, alt-rock/pop riffs signature to their debut release, which Shepard pays tribute to in "Fake Angels" – singing of "All these dead spiders in the basement…" Combine that with the ambiguity of weird, modern/indie art-showcased discography, and you've got the closest audio magic on the fringes of strolling through Fern Gully as a fairy tale daydream. ~~[THE MILITIA GROUP] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

Read more album reviews on the "flip side" – page 57

PICK OF THE LITTER

ChristopherThe Lion + Jeff Mulhaneyuckipoo

Christopher & The Lion and Daniel Folmer combined their artistic abilities on one simplistically crafted two-part CD masterpiece, *Born to Movement; A Rock N' Roll Split: Vol. 1*. The first six tracks by Daniel Folmer are heartfelt and personal. I would put Daniel Folmer in his own unique genre of music as he uses acoustic guitar, distorted digital aspects, and other random noises to go along with his somewhat rough, folksy voice. Upbeat and creative, Daniel Folmer's music is more than enjoyable and very captivating.

Enter: Christopher & The Lion. With a voice soothing enough to sing you to sleep, the last six tracks are lovely. Composed mainly of acoustic guitar and soft drums, 'Parking Garages' is the more 'experimental' of the songs, and a tambourine is timely thrown in at the end of 'Take it Easy.' Honest, intriguing, and romantic, Christopher & The Lion is aimed for success with peaceful rhythms and touching lyrics. (Laurel Erickson)
myspace.com/dfolmer + myspace.com/christopherandthelion

Allatusadeo

This band from PLACE performs some excellent, intense, screaming noise and destructive metal. We're talking inventive guitar noises and well-placed blips and blood-curdling screams. (Doug Van Pelt)
myspace.com/allatusadeo

LeviThe Poet

Out of control! Spoken word with an experimental approach and very powerfully written. Chaotic, raw, controversial, and energetic – Levi the Poet is a fresh taste of creativity and you would be doing yourself more than just one favor by checking him out. (LE)
myspace.com/levithepoet

Hope For The Dying

I've got a fever, and the only prescription is…MORE SHREDDING! And thus the sick will be healed. Solid metal-groove, dirty guitars, classic screech/growls galore, you won't be able to help but get your grind hands moving. (LM)
hopeforthedying.com

The Machine

Nu Metal fans, anyone? Heavy, hard rocking guitar, fast bass, and violent, powerful vocals combine with lyrical heaviness to create a professional mix reminiscent of early Project 86 underground. This five-track E.P. is begging for a full-length and a boost into the limelight. (Levi Macallister)
myspace.com/themachinemusic

ManufraQ'ture

This industrial metal project has been around for awhile and is recently cranking up the electronics again ... this time as the solo project of Benn (TranQ). On 2005's *No Rest For The Wicked*, they provide a lovely hybrid of heaviness and melody. Expect more of the same. (DV)
manufraqture.com

Husband & Wife

Mellow and beautifully crafted. Soft rock that flows along with the vocals to match. (LE)
husband-wife.net

Jake Smith

Beautiful acoustics, smooth piano, with very jazzy aspects. Jack Johnson meets Josh Garrels. Chill with tones of worship. (LE)
jakesmithmusic.com

Athens

Heavy! Chaotic! Perfect! You can picture yourself getting beaten to a pulp in a pit during the massive breakdowns, squealing feedback, and ferocious screams. Immediate head banging necessary upon infiltration of the auditory organs. (LM)
myspace.com/athens777

Gulls

Straight up hard rock and raw vocals, it is very easy to picture Gulls slipping right into the music scene and making a name for themselves- and doing it well. (LE)
myspace.com/gullstheband

Through A Glass

I bet this band puts on a heck of a show. It's good melodic rock. Most any of the songs on *Tragedy vs. Comedy* could get airplay on the radio. (DV)
throughaglass.net

Close Your Eyes

Good, solid screamo. Well produced with several strong vocal performances (including several chant-along gang choruses) on this 6-song EP. (DV)
myspace.com/closeyoureyesmusic

CALEB MORGAN

i killed myself.

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dear MoM

this is what I really want for Christmas:

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02 **A SKYLIT DRIVE** | *WIRES AND THE CONCEPT OF BREATHING* | *myspace.com/askylitdrive*

03 **A KISS FOR JERSEY** | *VICTIMS* | *myspace.com/akissforjersey*

04 **GLENN KAISER BAND** | *OCTANE* | *grrrrecords.com*

05 **RESURRECTION BAND** | *MUSIC TO RAISE THE DEAD 1972-1998* | *grrrrecords.com*

06 **SUPER.FI 5 PRO** | *ULTIMATE EARS* | *ultimateears.com*

07 **JACK LONDON** | *WHITE SUIT GETTING BROWN* | *myspace.com/thejacklondon*

08 **NEVERTHELESS** | *IN THE MAKING...* | *tiredofsleepingin.com*

09 **PILLAR** | *FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME* | *pillarmusic.com*

10 **FIREFLIGHT** | *UNBREAKABLE* | *myspace.com/fireflight*

11 **SUUBI** | *(HOPE)* | *suubiafrica.org*

12 **JON MCLAUGHLIN** | *OKNOW* | *jonmcl.com*

13 **SANDSTORM** | *CLOTHING WITH A BRAIN* | *myspace.com/sandstormproduction*

14 **REMEDY DRIVE** | *DAYLIGHT IS COMING* | *remedydrive.com*

15 **STELLAR KART** | *EXPECT THE IMPOSSIBLE* | *stellarkart.com*

16 **I AM** | *1 WORLD. 1 CHILD. 1 SONG. 1 DOWNLOAD. 1 DOLLAR.* | *i-amhope.com*

17 **GLEN ROWLANDS** | *RED ROAD* | *myspace.com/glenrowlandscd*

18 **OPEN IT!** | *ZIBRA* | *enjoyzibra.com*

Gift Guide

MUSIC, GIFTS & GADGETS

01

02

03

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06

(**1**) **EZdrummer** is a drum sampler designed for musicians and producers in need of a compact, affordable, easy to handle plug-in without compromising sound quality. The visualized interface combine auditioning of sounds and drumkit construction. The drag and drop MIDI library enables users to create a great drum track in just a few clicks. Suddenly everything got EZ. (**2**) **A Skylit Drive** From Lodi, CA comes A Skylit Drive, a combo who play layered and dynamic rock w/heavy arrangements and vocals that belt as big as the singer from Styx. Speaking on the album, vocalist Michael Jagmin says, "We came up with the lyrics together, we're all basically dorks at heart and instead of writing songs about being sad like a lot of groups today, we wanted songs that would make us smile later." There's an apparent growth musically and in sophistication since the band's inaugural EP, *She Watched The Sky.* (**3**) **A Kiss For Jersey** Hailing from Pilot Mountain, NC, the band found themselves part of a thriving hardcore scene. All the members of the band are devout Christians and while they have plenty of fans who aren't, their music uses imagery and messages taken from the Bible. Zach reveals that a lot of the lyrics on the new album are inspired by passages by The Book of Revelation. "There's a lot of crazy stuff going on in the world, a lot of persecution. I want to let kids know it is ok to do those things and to show faith in your own way." (**4**) Don't miss the white-hot new studio release from Christian music's premier blues-rock trio, the **Glenn Kaiser Band**. *Octane* serves up a sonic smorgasbord of classic rock, blues and R&B with a fire and passion that entertains yet challenges at the same time. Available on Grrr Records. (**5**) The first career-spanning box set from **Resurrection Band** includes three CDs with 52 digitally re-mastered songs, one DVD with over an hour of previously unreleased live concert video, and an 80-page full color booklet containing a detailed history of Resurrection Band illustrated with dozens of photos. Own a piece of Christian rock history.

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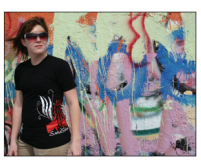
(**6**) **Super.Fi 5 Pro** From the folks that brought the in-ear monitors (Ultimate Ears) comes a set of headphones for personal use. The breathing room allows for a booming bass, the flexible ear loops make for a comfortable and secure fit over the ears. (**7**) "This album is the first to come from this young and energizing Icelandic band named **Jack London**. Melody and powerful rock melody similar to Jeff Buckley, Rush and The Mars Volta, though bringing something new and exciting to the genre of Christian rock scene. White suit getting brown is an album that all true rocker's should own, both old and new. (**8**) **Nevertheless** *In The Making…* is piano-heavy pop/rock music that invites you into the heart of Nevertheless. (**9**) **Pillar**'s *For The Love Of The Game* is big, fun, infectious rock and roll that further solidifies Pillar's position as fearless leaders in the Christian Rock world. (**10**) **Fireflight**'s *Unbreakable* finds this band from Florida flexing its rock muscles. (**11**) Unique hand-crafted necklaces for both men and women made out of recycled paper beads. The buying and reselling of the necklaces generates a consistent income in Uganda, Africa for the women of **Suubi** (hope). These women are amazing, courageous, and beautiful – we have been shown a hope that changes everything – be a part of the change. (**12**) When we last saw **Jon McLaughlin**, the 25-year-old singer/songwriter was giving a show-stopping performance of the Oscar-nominated "So Close," on the worldwide telecast of the *80th Annual Academy Awards*. Since then, Jon has been in the studio recording his second Island Records release, *OK NOW*. The new album includes amazing tracks like "Beating My Heart," the first single, which is an introspective, existential tune about nothing less than the meaning of life right up to "We All Need Saving" – about the importance of friendship. Jon is currently headlining a series of shows in five different U.S. cities as part of this fall's *Pinktober* campaign and will be on tour throughout the end of the year. *OK NOW* is In Stores NOW.



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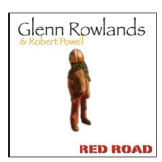

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(**13**) An up and coming clothing company with new ideas, **SandStorm** brings hope and a new light to the world we live. Trying to break from the norm of "Christian" t-shirts, we want to present God's truth in a relevant way. Full line out next spring. (**14**) Four-piece, four-brother band from Lincoln, Nebraska, **Remedy Drive** has been cranking out their piano driven rock tunes as an indie band for the past three years across the Midwest/West Coast. Delivering a message of hope, they combine their heart-on-a-sleeve sensibility with an acrobatic and explosive live show. Catch them on tour with The Afters this December. (**15**) **Stellar Kart** is back with a pop/rock tour de force that includes the band's most mature lyrics yet. Their new album is intentionally themed around topics most important to the turbulent lives of today's teens, such as friendship, loss & redemption. Don't miss Stellar Kart on Superchick's *Rock What You Got Tour* through November. (**16**) **I Am**: Our goal is to raise $1,000,000.00+ for youth, abused, orphaned, and neglected children worldwide. Foster homes across America, as well as orphanages around the world will be encouraged through the gift of music. Although music is important, our focus is to build up the future leaders of our world. (**17**) **Glenn Rowlands & Robert Powell**'s newest release is *Red Road*. It's Rock and Roll! Matthew 28:2. [$5 shipping included], checks payable to: Glenn Rowlands, 1720 El Mirage Rd. #A, Adelanto, CA 92301 Credit Cards accepted through PayPal at rowlandsg@yahoo.com Preview music at their myspace page. (**18**) The **Open It** Universal Package Opener is designed to open all types of retail packaging. This universal tool offers you a sturdy safe way to open clam shell packaging with ease. No more "Wrap Rage" when trying to open your items. There are over 6000 reported emergency room incidents resulting from wrap rage. With the Open It tool in your house you will never fall victim to the rage.

BEING IN **FAMILY FORCE 5** IS KIND OF LIKE DOING WHAT YOU ALWAYS DREAMED OF DOING AS A KID.

BY DAVID STAGG

More specifically, playing in a band that's headlining a tour called *Dance Rawr Dance 2* where you get to dress in costume for every night you play with an audience that does the same while messing around with a six-and-a-half foot tall drum machine called Family Force 5000. And even though their band name sounds a little like the Brady Bunch (and actually might be the most normal thing about them), the FF5 quintet is hardly your run-of-the-mill, '50s-era, dinner-on-the-table-when-you-get-home type of family. Brothers Soul Glow Activator, Crouton, and Fatty were all running sound at church in their hometown of Atlanta when—

Yeah. Soul Glow Activator, Crouton, and Fatty. Their names.

It's just like you were when you were growing up; you had an alter-ego. A place you could go in your head to escape, to fly, to save lives, or just to jump from your bunk bed to the ground to save the world. That feeling's never changed for Family Force 5. Their names provide them with the venue to actually be Family Force 5. It's their goal to take you away from life for awhile, to give you your own alter-ego while you're at their show. I spoke with guitarist Derek Mount (aka Chap Stique) and he made sure to emphasize this: When you go to their shows, they want you to escape. Transport you to another land. In fact, they're going to go through great pains to make sure you have the best possible time you can have at one of their shows.

Chap Stique's got a Southern pep in his voice—and yes, I'm going to refer to them as their alter-egos because, believe it or not, they also call themselves by their alter-ego names—and he sounds like he couldn't physically yell at anything. He's enjoying life and that feeling seems to come through in his tone of voice. And why shouldn't he be? On the heels of releasing their sophomore album, *Dance or Die*, they've just finished up *Warped Tour* and by the time you read this will be out headlining their own tour. Add to that *Dance or Die* landed at #30 on the Billboard charts—and even #1 in Christian and #8 in Modern Rock.

It's a real good reason to be happy.

Family Force 5 is made up of three brothers, vocalist and guitarist Solomon "Soul Glow Activator" Olds, drummer Jacob "Crouton" Olds, and bassist Joshua "Fatty" Olds, playing alongside keyboardist and DJ Nathan "Nadaddy" Currin and guitarist Derek "Chap Stique" Mount. Chap Stique is the most recent member, having joined right at the release of the band's first record, *Business in the Front, Party in the Back*, an obvious reference to the mullet their home state of Georgia seems to embrace. Chap Stique was actually going to school full-time at the University of Georgia on Tuesdays and Thursdays and utilizing his scheduled days off to work with the band. They had recently parted ways with former guitarist Twenty Cent when they gave Chap Stique a call to see if he wanted to try out.

He had been friends with the guys from before; the three brothers were running sound at the church Chap Stique attended and they hung out and went out to eat together and he was running a Sunday night worship service all at the same place. And when the band called for help, Chap Stique was more than happy to oblige.

They then immediately asked him if he was ready to fly to L.A. for a photo shoot for the record.

Since then, it's been an ever-increasing rise to notoriety. They just finished playing *Warped Tour* where multiple times they were voted the winner of the Energizer Encore Competition that won them the ability to play the encore at the shows. They've been voted winners of seven Reader's Choice Awards over at *CCM*, including Best Artist, Best Band, and Best Live Performance. And if Myspace is any indicator of fandom, they have over 13 million plays.

It's no secret how they do it, either: They are all about their fans. Their number one goal is to build a relationship with them, whether it's through riding rides with the kids after their concert at a fair, going out to eat with them, or just hanging out at the merch booth after a show for an extended period of time—they're investing in them. They want them to feel loved. They want them to have a good time. Most importantly, they want them to know that when you go to a Family Force 5 show, you're going to be taken to a different world.

"It's a very futuristic and apocalyptic album to us," Chap Stique says about their latest release. "It takes you to a place where other music doesn't go. It's very, very different than stuff that's taking place musically out there right now." There's a whole lot of Daft Punk and Justice in there, two bands they've been listening to a lot. As Chap Stique explains, the progression from *Business* FF5 to *Dance or Die* FF5 was a natural one. "Nothing was forced," he says. "These were the songs we felt inclined to write. I think we matured a lot—there's definitely still a lot of humor and a tongue-in-cheek approach to a lot of it—but (*Dance or Die*) says a lot more than the last record."

And before you die-hard FF5 fans cry foul and want more guitar over synth, you'd be surprised to know a lot of the sounds you think are synthesizers on the record are actually still guitars. "So many of the synth you're hearing on the record actually are guitars," Chap Stique says. "We used a ton of effects people don't normally use on guitars. We're really inspired by Tom Morello and the way he sees the guitar as DJ equipment. We do that a lot. That was a big part of our evolution."

Evolution is right. In fact, so far evolved, we're talking space suits and a drum machine they built that's over six feet tall and named Family Force 5000. We're talking Chap Stique just got measured to be fit for a space suit for their upcoming *Dance Rawr Dance 2* tour. And they want you to be a part of it. That whole investing in their fans thing? They want every fan that comes to a show on this tour to dress up in a futuristic outfit as well to match their look and the sound and feel of their latest record. "Audience participation is a huge part of our show," Chap Stique explains. "We've been telling all the fans that come out to the show to wear silver and anything futuristic. There are plenty of tricks up our sleeve."

At the end of the day—when you're home from work or school and you're looking to relax—the band hopes you'll pop in their record and escape. If they're in town that night, take the time to go to their show and kick back and let loose. Chap Stique put what I gather to be FF5's philosophy best when he was telling me a story about when the band was playing *Warped Tour*. They're obviously a dance band and they're out there playing with metal bands and metalcore kids, sharing stages with As I Lay Dying and Killswitch Engage. I wanted to know how the response went—metal kids aren't always known to be the most accepting of other types of music. "We were blown away (by the response)," Chap Stique says to me. "This was our third year on *Warped Tour*. The first year, we weren't really sure what to expect. We're the dance band and then As I Lay Dying comes on and rips your head off. But the kids responded well. A big element we have is a fun live show that's completely intense and over-the-top. I think the unique factor is refreshing even if they are metal kids there to see Killswitch." That's when he said what I've learned is at the heart of Family Force 5: "Everyone still likes to laugh and everyone still likes to dance."

✖

Photo: Alonso Muniz

Disciple

THE GREAT SOUTHERN TREND KILLERS

BY DAN MACINTOSH

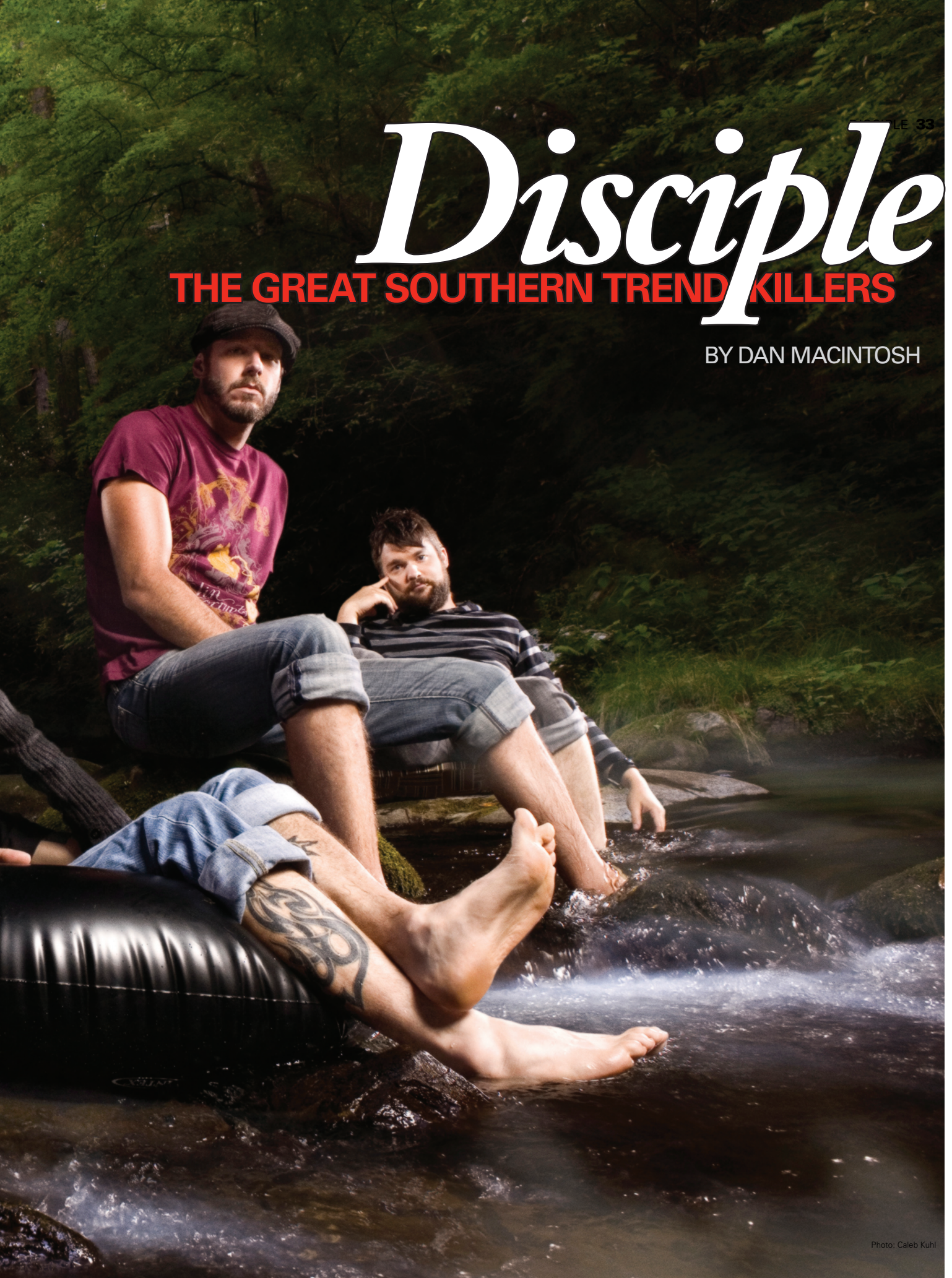

Photo: Caleb Kuhl

Disciple

titled its latest CD *Southern Hospitality*, which makes sense because vocalist Kevin Young is consistently hospitable. And being that the group is originally from Tennessee, they also have the whole Southern thing down as well. "We had a tour last year called *Southern Hospitality*," Young explains. "And we just loved the title, the name. You know, we all grew up in East Tennessee. We've never been good at hiding the fact that we're Southern. We sound Southern, act Southern, the whole thing." But this disc's naming convention has much more to do with Southern musical connotations than stereotypical Southern Belle manners. "After we'd written a couple songs for the album, they had a real Southern rock feel to them," Young says. "I was just talking to (guitarist) Brad (Noah) one day and asked, 'Why don't we call the album *Southern Hospitality*?' And he said, 'That'd be awesome!' We talked to our manager and talked to our record company, and they were, like, 'That's great. Let's do it!'"

This project's Allman-y/Lynyrd-ly/Outlaw-ish-ness immediately got the mental wheels spinning over at the band's label, SRE Records. "The label said, 'We should make a Southern rock record,'" Young recalls them saying. "We were, like, 'We already wrote it.' So it worked out pretty well."

The group felt free as a bird, both figuratively and literally, to explore their Southern rock leanings with this fresh, semi-Dixie fried release.

"'Free Bird' had a huge influence on a song called 'Lay My Burdens,'" Young expounds. "It was really cool to see some of that come out in that song, and to have written a song like that in Disciple. We've always really been a heavy metal band, with no regrets, and plan on continuing to be a heavy metal band. (But) we've always been a bunch of guys that write songs that we like and write whatever we're feeling at the time. That's why our CDs rarely sound alike; each one is different from the other one – it [Southern rock inspired] was just how we were writing and the kind of music we wanted to write at the time. And we're really excited about *Southern Hospitality*."

And when exactly did Young master "Free Bird," anyway?

"I don't know how to play 'Free Bird,' Young admits, "I would just say it influenced us all on the album. Probably Noah is the only guy (in the band) that knows how to play the guitar solo at the end." Okay. So how many times have fans yelled out for "Free Bird" during concerts? "I've lost count," Young says. "I actually want to learn it just so that one time when somebody yells it, we'll go, 'Comin' right up.'"

We all know the Prodigal Son story from The Bible, and this familiar spiritual pattern was running through Young's head a whole lot while the group was creating their latest album.

"It really seems like a very personal album," Young begins. "And one theme that just runs throughout it is kind of like a Prodigal Son type theme; just come home, return to God type themes. It just seems like that's happening in a lot of the songs. I don't think it was intentional or anything like that. But when I listen to it I'm, like, 'I hear a lot of that.'" And let's not forget, this Bible story has a happy ending. "Without getting too deeply theological, I believe that God is capable of finishing what He started," Young asserts. "When He starts a work of salvation in our lives, I believe He can finish it. Even if we stray, I think He definitely has the ability to woo us back."

Young returns to the Prodigal Son theme again and again because he knows many people can relate to it. But he also wrote about this parable because it's a story that ought to warm the heart of every true believer.

"For someone who knows somebody that they love that used to have a relationship with Christ, but has fallen away; to hear this song – 'Whatever Reason' – is very moving," Young says.

Nobody ever wants to dine with swine. Instead, Satan makes sin look awfully appealing, to the point where foolish men and women fall for his lies – hook, line, and sinker. To help make this pitchfork point, Disciple has included a song on *Southern Hospitality* that poetically describes the Devil's evil bait.

"'Romance Me' is probably one of the best lyrical songs I've ever written," Young says proudly. "It really just throws a lot of imagery out there for sin, the disease of sin and what it really looks like. Instead of writing a literal song, and by using a lot of imagery, it's probably my greatest achievement as a poet. I'm proud of that."

Guitarist Brad Noah no longer tours with Disciple. And while this is a drag for concert fans that will greatly miss seeing his amazing fret work live, his new stationary role – so to speak – has already paid huge dividends for the group.

"(While away from the road) Brad has become more familiar with recording. And it opened up new doors for Disciple because all of us have always been artists that have never really been interested in recording," Young says. "We've just always been interested in writing music and letting other people record us, instead of us recording ourselves. Us recording ourselves for the last 15 years has been taking a cassette tape and hitting record, you know? But Brad's taken an interest in recording since he's not touring with

Lessons from Brad [Noah]

Brad Noah is now the "Bob Hartman of Disciple." For those of you that are too young to know what that means (which, in Christian rock circles is like not knowing who Keith Richards is or what band he plays in); let's just put it this way: as a founding member, he couldn't just completely leave when his aching back took him out of the live concert touring regimen.

What lessons did you learn from 16 years with Disciple?
"I learned that I was a jerk," Noah admits. "I don't know why I became a jerk out of it. A lot of it had to do with, you know, my back hurtin' all the time and just bein' in pain. But there was really just no excuse for it in the end. You just get to where you feel like you're on top of everybody or something, like ... the people that are paying your bills, and buying your merch, actually are bothering you ... by trying to talk to you too much, trying to get too close to you. I think if you had a band pastor or something like that, that they'd be able to help you out with that. And my wife …

the band anymore, so we really had a chance to work hard and fine-tune the songs. It was probably the first time ever where we went into the studio prepared. We walked into the studio knowing what we wanted. Knowing how we wanted the songs to go; knowing what words we wanted to sing and what melodies we wanted to sing; what guitar riffs we wanted to play, what drum beats we wanted to play. We went in prepared this time, and I think, subsequently, we produced the best album we ever had."

In many ways, Disciple is proving that, yes, you can teach old dogs new tricks. Not only did the group go into the studio Boy Scout prepared, if you will, but the band has also expanded its lineup from originally being just a trio, to a full five-piece act. That's a big step – especially because Young, Noah and drummer Tim Barrett began as high school buddies. Although the original nucleus is still there, this is a much different band from the one that began rocking in 1992. Yet it was a lingering health concern that ultimately prompted Disciple to grow numerically to this next sequential odd number.

was a no brain-er for us. We looked for two guitar players to fill Brad's spot so we could actually play some of the things that are on the CDs."

Disciple's new guitarists are Micah Sannan and Andrew Welch, and the group also recruited a new bass player, Israel Beachy, formerly of Staple.

"We didn't know if Micah Sannan (from Falling Up) was a good guitar player, but we knew that he looked awesome on stage," Young says, only half joking. "He did back flips off his guitar amp, he's really young, and has long blonde hair flinging around everywhere. So we really wanted this guy in the band, because we think he brings such great stage presence. Andrew is a great guitar player. It was so difficult to find somebody that could play Brad's solos, and Andrew's actually stepped in and done an amazing job. So we're real proud of him." Of bassist Israel Beachy, Young recalls commenting, "'I really wish I could be in a band with that guy!' Israel has always been that guy for me." Now, Young's wish has come true.

Disciple may no longer be just three old high school friends playing rock and roll together. But even with their major recent changes, the group has lost none of the joy that brought them together in the first place.

"I can't say enough about the new guys in the band and just how awesome they are ... Really, they have just truly brought new life to the band."

"I can't say enough about the new guys in the band and just how awesome they are," Young gushes. "Really, they have just truly brought new life to the band. They're amazing onstage and offstage. Brad's had some back issues for the last couple of years. The doctors have been trying to tell him to take a break for a long time. He finally, after years and years of not listening, decided to listen to them. Of course, me being very selfish, I didn't want him to listen to the doctors, ever. He's the greatest guitar player I've ever known. I didn't ever want to go on stage with anybody other than him. But I feel like he made the right move, and God has really taken care of us and sent us some guys that are just awesome in his place."

But instead of subtracting from Disciple's guitar power, as Young initially feared would happen, the unit has actually filled out its live guitar attack better than ever.

"Me and Tim have always wanted a couple of guitar players, just because we've always been a little bit of a guitar solo type band," Young elaborates. "But whenever the guitarist would go to play a guitar solo, it would just become empty on stage. So we've always wanted a two-guitar-player-band. Also, if there are two guitar parts on a song (on the CD), but only one guitar player, you never hear both parts. So when Brad decided to stay home, it

"For the first seven years of Disciple, we never even made a dime," Young recalls. "Seven years is a long time. So we were well into adulthood before we ever even made our first paycheck. We just believed in what we were doing. We just knew that that's what God put us on earth to do, at least for this part of our life. It wasn't even a question of: Should we be doing this or not? We just knew this was what we were supposed to do. And of course, there are times where it has become a job. And in those moments you have to get your head on straight and look at it from the right perspective; because if we ever look at it as a job then we're not looking at it the right way. Honestly, it's a privilege to serve, in any capacity."

This willingness to serve, once again expresses the band's inherent Southern hospitality. Service is a privilege, not a chore. Making music is a calling, not job. But more significantly, it reveals a true disciple's heart and a desire to go wherever Jesus leads.

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she never once said, "You need to leave Disciple. But, she did say that she didn't like what being on the road did to me when I came home."

It's hard to imagine this fun-loving, good ole' boy guitarist being a jerk; but when a man wants to repent, it's best to just stand back and let him go. Brad Noah is one of those guys that would probably get along real well with Johnny Cash. When something goes wrong, he won't think twice about rolling his sleeves up and doing something about it. When he's on your team, you know he's got your back and he'll work as hard or harder than anybody. I wondered how he got that way, so I asked him about how he was raised.

Turns out his parents quite literally dropped the ball on him as a youngster, so his Granny and "Pappa" raised him. They took him to church all the time, taught him the value of hard work, and instilled in him respect for others and treating your wife like a queen – all qualities that he exhibits on a regular basis. When asked to describe his Pappa, he recalled a story that encapsulated some of that gritty personality: "We were fishing on the lake one day. And ... there was a huge hornets nest. I'm thinking we're just about to be killed here. He just says, 'Put your life jacket on, jump in and start swimming over there.' He takes (this huge) hornet's nest down with his bare hands. They're stinging him all over the place. He just throws them in the water and drowns them. And of course there are still a bunch of them, stinging him and everything. But he don't care. He jumps out of the boat, comes over and picks me up. They're still stinging him. You know, he was a man's man. And they don't make 'em like that anymore."

Maybe not, but there's one named Brad Noah that's pretty similar.

—Doug Van Pelt

FAMILY FORCE 5

Photo: Michelle Star

SOME SAY THAT TENSION IS THE ULTIMATE DESTROYER TO THE CREATIVE PROCESS, AND ULTIMATELY, TO BANDS THEMSELVES, AND ADVOCATES OF THIS VIEWPOINT WILL SAY THAT OPPOSING POLES AND VIEWPOINTS CAN CREATE WARFARE IN ANY RELATIONSHIP. BUT THE MEMBERS OF BECOMING THE ARCHETYPE HAVE FOUND MEANING IN THE CONCEPT OF *DICHOTOMY*—THE TITLE OF THEIR NEW RELEASE—IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. TENSION, IN THIS CASE, CREATES HEALTHY DIALOGUE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE OF CREATIVE IDEALS, RESULTING IN AN EPIC LANDSCAPE OF 'WHAT IS THIS,' THEIR THIRD RELEASE AND OPUS. I SPOKE WITH FRONTMAN/BASSIST JASON WISDOM AND GUITARIST/KEYBOARDIST SETH HACOX RECENTLY ABOUT THE SECRETS BEHIND THEIR MAGICAL FORMULA, WHICH HAS CARRIED THEIR BAND THROUGH NEARLY A DECADE OF AWE-INSPIRING METAL:

SCHWAB: You guys are nearing the decade mark as a band, and with your upcoming third release, *Dichotomy*, you will officially be deemed (gasp!) veterans. This is no small feat, and one you should be more than just a little proud of. What do you think has given you the drive to continue together as a unit? Sheer audacity? Insanity? Or is it just a complete devotion to the metal...

SETH: Ha ha, yeah, insanity probably had something to do with it. You know, there's an element in the makeup of an artist (that) deeply desires to share the art that has been created and let others know and appreciate the fruit of your labor. It is definitely not complete devotion to the metal, because as much as we like metal and the opportunities it provides for us to explore musicality, we've found inspiration from places certainly outside of metal for some of our most creative sections, especially recently.

JASON: I think that it is some combination of all of those things. And if it weren't for our faith we would have probably disbanded years ago. We believe that we have something profound to say musically and spiritually and we are confident that we have captured it on this new album. Musically and spiritually this album invades uncharted territory for BTA and I think that as long as we are always finding new places to go, then we will keep exploring.

SCHWAB: On *Dichotomy* you have admittedly found your more progressive side ... did you have to dig deep to find this alternate version of your personality as a band, or did it just flow naturally, as an evolution from previous work? Are there any specific bands that were buzzing in your ear with the fresh direction?

SETH: The sounds we've laid out on this album definitely did flow naturally from our "collective conscience," if you will. This album was the easiest to write in the sense that when Jon and Jason and I sat down to discuss what direction the new songs should go, the discussion was over almost before it started. It was one of those unique experiences where you look in your comrade's eye and see a kindred spirit. It became apparent very quickly that we were all on the same page and our combined experiences and musical influences drove us in that direction untamed.

JASON: To be honest, the term "progressive" won't be the first thing that jumps out at you when you hear the new album. That is not to say that we have abandoned that aspect of our

"It became apparent very quickly that we were all on the same page and our combined experiences and musical influences drove us in that direction unfamed."

sound, but it has found its place amidst the rest of who we are. *Dichotomy* is unlike our first two releases in the sense that this time around we weren't trying to "reinvent the wheel." When we wrote the albums leading up to this one we had it in our heads that originality should always be priority #1. What we have learned is that in most cases what we often think is "totally original" was perfected by someone else years ago. The most unique and original thing that a musician can try to do is make a perfect album that no one will be able to dislike. That would be a real accomplishment. Pull out all of the stops, leave no stone unturned, don't worry about what people will say or what other bands have done and just try to make the best album that you can. That is where we set our sights for *Dichotomy*.

SCHWAB: How did producer Devin Townsend bring something new to the process and the finished product?
JASON: Devin is an amazing producer and an amazing human. His hands are all over the album and it really comes through. He is the master of "layering" and every song on *Dichotomy* is stacked to the heavens. He told us that he wanted to make this album "sound as epic as the *Lord of the Rings* movies look." So, it goes without saying that we watched the trilogy a few times while we were tracking the record. This is the first album that we have really had someone "produce" our songs and we couldn't be more excited about the end result. He challenged us both musically and spiritually to become more mature and capture all of that energy on the recording.

SETH: Yeah, a lot of people tend to think that Uncy Devy (as we affectionately refer to him) is out of his mind. But really, he's going through some incredible personal and spiritual changes recently and it was perfect for our creative process. Jason's right in saying that he's all over this album: I've told a few people that the album is his creation almost as much as our creation. He really took our songs and brought them to a place that surpassed where we thought the songs could go. He opened up areas of creativity in our brain that we didn't know existed and he said several times throughout the process that he wished we could do three months instead of a month and a half, because that's what our music deserved and that much time could be spent adding and creating and letting the songs morph into something fabulously ingenious.

SCHWAB: What records/bands did you grow up listening to, and was there one record you could point to and say, "That record changed my life and forever doomed me to becoming a musician because of the way it affected me...?"
SETH: Ha, I'm, like, doomed. That certainly is an appropriate term for what we go through, isn't it? There were obviously many records or bands that propelled me toward that "doomnation," but if I had to name one, it'd have to be *Undeceived* by Extol. That album got my mind turning in ways it hadn't dreamed possible. Also, am I allowed to say, *Drawing Black Lines*, by you and yours?

JASON: The music I listened to growing up was mainly country, and being from the South I still get a heavy dose of it every day. In high school, though, I started listening to a lot of the original bands on Solid State, like Living Sacrifice, Extol, Zao and Embodyment. Oddly enough, they all put out records within the span of one year (97-98) that I still consider among my biggest influences. I would say that was pretty significant since I am now in a Solid State band and doing an interview about the upcoming release of our THIRD album.

SCHWAB: A spiritual question of sorts ... and one that begs for candor: What do you think is the most crucial lesson young artists of faith can learn in order to retain their faith in an industry known for devouring young artists in every way possible?
JASON: This is a great question and one that I don't believe I was fully prepared to answer until we recorded this new album. The most important question to answer before you ever begin is "what does my faith have to do with this industry?" If you are starting a band because you want to be cool or because you love music, that is totally normal. But if your only reason for dubbing it a "Christian band" is because all of the members are currently going to church, then you are likely to get hurt and hurt other people in the process. You will need a ridiculously strong determination and commitment to your faith in Christ to survive on the road and avoid buckling under the constant temptation to "conceal the message using metaphor." If from day one the music is your number one priority and faith is number two, you are building a very unstable house. Popularity and money will eventually work their way up the ladder until they start battling for the top spot. If you have "integrity," then the music will win out, but not at the expense of faith, which just moves farther and farther down the list. Heed this warning! Examine your heart before you pick up that axe and start swinging it in this exceedingly dangerous arena that is the music industry.

SETH: This is an area where I will have to disagree a little bit with Jason. It seems to me that if you've chosen art as the vehicle for expressing your faith, you ought to make the art your number one priority; or else no one is going to appreciate it and it's going to be a disgrace to the faith. If you just want to be a ministry or mainly a ministry, then help out with feeding the poor or sponsor a child or go on a mission trip, or if you feel compelled to write words that satisfy, write poetry. But if you're going to put your poetry to music, make the music good. No, make it great. Claiming to be a faith-based artist by no means excuses you from the art communities' demand to create something worthwhile. And it by no means excuses you from the biblical command to do what your hands find to do with all your might. I often think about the relation of art to faith and I find that those who had the greatest influence and impact spiritually through art were men of God that didn't label themselves "Christian artists" and didn't sign to Christian record labels and didn't preach at their concerts. Not to say those things are wrong (look at us, we do all those things), but probably the best way to be an upright man or woman of God in the artistic world is to realize your work is art and you should do your work the very best that you can, just like any other job. And you take your faith with you into that work and it's apparent to everyone around, because the lyrics come from a soul that has been forgiven and the beauty emanates from a worldview that is based on grace and love. Those two elements are undeniable no matter who you are.

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The Power
BECOMI

# of Tension

NG THE ARCHETYP

BY ANDREW SCHWAB

Photo: Chris Law

Feel Good Luke

THE BAD NEWS BEARERS

BY DAN MACINTOSH

Cool Hand Luke is back with a new CD, titled *The Sleeping House*. But the music on it may make them come off a little like rock & roll bearers of bad news. "The content on the record is sort of observations on the condition of the church and the condition of man, which is not exactly a happy topic," admits keyboardist/drummer/vocalist Mark Nicks. "And I know some of it is heavier in content than previous albums, and even the music is a little more – I don't want to say heavy – but it's a little more rockin' than our last couple records have been."

Not only is the group rocking a little harder, but they're also rocking the Christian cultural boat, so to speak. Nicks is concerned that the image the church presents, particularly via Christian televangelists and Christian politically conservative movements, is not always a comprehensive and accurate one.

"I have nothing against going to church," Nicks clarifies from the start. "I'm a part of a local church and I feel like I'm part of a really good church family. My church … I really identify with the vision they have and their focus to the community and their outreach to the community here in Nashville. So, when I say, 'the condition of the church,' I'm in no way church-bashing or saying people shouldn't go to church, or that organized religion is bad or anything like that. But I think the Western church, particularly the American church, has kind of lost sight of the teachings of Christ and clung to human traditions and principles of this world, which is what Colossians 2:8 tells us not to be taken captive by. Everything's very consumer-driven, and being a Christian in America is oftentimes equated with being a Republican or a conservative or however you want to say it. I just think Christ is calling us to Himself. And not to American ideals, but His teachings."

Nicks may be concerned, it's true, but he's certainly not hopeless. He simply believes there is a healthier way to separate church from the state.

"I've seen a lot of hope, because I think people are kind of waking up and starting to think for themselves and look at what Christ has taught, instead of what their parents taught or what society has taught," he adds. "It still seems like the loudest Christians are the ones on TV who say things in the name of Christ that I don't think represent Christ or the followers of Christ. I've gotten to the point where I just wish people would leave God out of their politics, because so many politicians make statements and people identify them with Christianity and faith and church, and it's just not representative of what a lot of Christians believe. I don't think Christ would really back a lot of what's going on in His Name."

Nicks is native to Nashville, TN, a town where most residents are originally from someplace else. And living there has allowed him to see firsthand the way many previously on-fire Christians have cooled off significantly; especially once cool cash started rolling in.

"Unlike a lot of musicians, I was actually born here," he explains. "So, Nashville is just home to me, and I didn't really realize there was anything particularly musical about living in Nashville until I got older and was actually in a band. Christianity's an industry here, because most of the Christian labels are here and there's a lot of Christian publishing that goes on in Nashville. I've met some really amazing people who are really following Christ and I've met some really disappointing people who have really learned how they can market Jesus. It makes me sad. I've been in Cool Hand Luke for almost ten years, and it seems like over the years I've met so many amazing bands where, when they start, they really want to play music and serve God and have ministry. But as time goes on they have [found that] dropping [the ministry] part of that can make you more money. That's what happens. It breaks my heart."

This is not to say that it's only "Nashville" Christian artists who are behaving this way; money can drastically change any Christian musician – most of the time for the worse.

"I just remember one incident in particular, just being at a festival seeing somebody who I'd known for years and who I used to have really great conversations with about music and life and God and hope, and all these good things. And all of a sudden he wouldn't acknowledge that he knew me, because over the past few years his band had gotten way bigger than Cool Hand Luke and they sell way more records. And they rolled up on a bus. And he couldn't stop just to say, 'hi' to me."

***The Sleeping House* is both complex and beautiful at the same time.**

"There are kind of two ways you can look at it," says Nicks of this title. "One is that we are the church and we are asleep, as one of the songs on the record is called 'The Incomprehensible Sleep.' I took that phrase from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, because that's what he called the incident when the disciples were asleep when Jesus was just saying, 'Stay awake and pray for me.' That's one view of it [the album's title]. And the other view of it is the view of just God's glory and His house and His temple. It's almost like somewhere along the way we have buried God at the bottom of the ocean. And there's a sleeping house down there for us to discover."

This unique analogy is also bolstered by some striking CD artwork.

"My good friend, Adam Baker, designed the artwork for the record," Nicks elaborates. "We talked a lot about just the theme of the sleeping house and what it could possibly mean. And he actually took some liberties with it that I hadn't necessarily thought of. The artwork is kind of in comic book form, and it features a diver as he's on the ocean floor [where] he discovers this building, which is supposed to be … Adam modeled it after Solomon's temple. He goes in and he sees all these sarcophaguses. And one of them has his own face. There's a frame where he's cutting the cord on his diving suit and it's just sort of the symbolism of dying to ourselves in order to follow God."

If you're a longtime Cool Hand Luke admirer, you no doubt realize Nicks is the only remaining original member of the group. Personnel changes are the nature of the band beast, but being down to just one original guy is still a little extreme.

"After (2004's) *Fires of Life* came out, we toured for almost a year and we were just burned out, and honestly not getting along very well," Nicks recalls. "And a lot of it was my fault, just because I was starting to lose sight of things and be really controlling. I would say that was a big factor. But also we weren't on the same page anymore. I don't know that ministry was as important to everybody in the band as it was me. And that became hard as we kind of grew up and changed. I just didn't know how to deal with people changing."

Even so, Nicks still believes in Cool Hand Luke, and he still has a desire to make great music that glorifies God.

"When I started in this band I was just finishing my freshman year in college," he remembers. "I was 19 years old and I lived with my parents and I didn't have a lot of bills or a lot of responsibilities. If we didn't make money, it didn't really matter, because we never set out to make money. But now I'm 29 and I don't live with my parents and money is just the reality of it. We have to make money. It's hard, because we don't make marketable music. I get frustrated and discouraged when we're home for a while and all I'm seeing is bills and trying to figure out how to make ends meet. But as soon as we get back on the road and we start playing shows and we get to talk with people and pray with people and I get to share my heart with people, I remember why I do this. And I really do love it."

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Photo: Casey McBride

LORD, HASTE THE DAY WHEN MY FAITH SHALL BE SIGHT

BY JOHN MCENTIRE

The early 1870s saw the Great Chicago Fire destroy the city leaving many destitute, including prominent American lawyer Horatio Gates Spafford. Like most in Chicago after the disaster, the successful lawyer lost nearly everything. Striking just two years after the death of his only son, Spafford seemed spared no trouble in life. Desiring to get his family out of the decimated city, his wife and four daughters boarded the steamship Ville Du Havre and set sail for England. On the journey, the vessel was struck by another and sunk, taking with it the lives of 226 of its passengers, including his four daughters. Spafford wasted no time leaving America to join his grieving wife, and while sailing the sea that claimed his children, amidst the misery and sorrow of his losses, he penned the words to "It Is Well With My Soul," one of the most influential hymns of all time.

Drawing inspiration from the history of the same hymn that gave them their name, Haste the Day has found the strength to weather their own trials of loss that would have signaled the end many times over for a band of lesser character. Having now lost two of its founding members, vocalist Jimmy Ryan, replaced by Steven Keech for 2007's *Pressure the Hinges*, and lead guitarist Jason Barnes, great thought was put into reevaluating the goals and purpose of the band. The decision to continue, despite the pain every loss brings and uncertainty of the band's future, was difficult, but the drive behind of Haste the Day is greater than just the combined ideas of talented musicians. It is a faith in their purpose and effectiveness as an artistic voice for Christ.

"It was really hard," explained bassist Mike Murphy. "When we found out that Jimmy was going to be leaving the band, we didn't know if the band was going to continue really, but we feel like God has called us to be a light in the hardcore scene. Then the Lord opened a door with Steven and he's been the best thing that's ever happened to Haste the Day. He's amazing. Then losing Jason, our best friend and amazing musician, we didn't know what we were going to do, but the Lord opened another door and the band is going great. And that's all glory to God, but it's been really hard."

"It's really cheesy, but our song 'When Everything Falls,' the lyric 'I will stand, I will stand when everything falls away' … I think about that when we sing it every night, how true that is and how I want it to be true in my life, and how when our band is falling apart it seems, we're going to stand strong and we're not going to waver and we're going to keep pushing strong and have faith that God is going to be there to hold us up."

When the primary drive of a band goes far beyond musicianship into the ideals of a calling, the music flows naturally from a purpose that adds to it both a sense of urgency and authenticity that cannot be simply artistically crafted or perfected. That purpose that drives Haste the Day to be a light in the hardcore scene is to present an honest message of hope, without shying away from the rough and tumble parts of life, through what they believe to be the most powerful and expressive of the arts.

"We've been very lucky. We've always done what we've wanted to do and we haven't tried to jump on a bandwagon when we could have. We just stayed true to who we were and the music we were putting out there was us. And I think kids see that, and see through a gimmick and I think they see something genuine in us, hopefully, and they appreciate that and they feel connected."

"Because we're all lost sometimes, you know," Murphy continues. "We're all confused and we're all mixed up about things and we're all torn and we're all scarred from our past and a lot of people are scarred from Christianity and they're really mixed up about. Hopefully God can shine through us to them and show them that God isn't rules, God isn't judgment, and God isn't religion, and God isn't abusive, but God is Love and Forgiveness and Peace and He wants all those things for us. Hopefully God can shine through us, even though we're imperfect and messed up ourselves. God uses imperfect vessels to show His love. That's our prayer as a band, that we can open our hearts up so He can shine through us."

If their steadily growing fan base and longevity in a genre too often ruled by shifting trends and fashion statements are any proof, Haste the Day's faithfulness and perseverance is being rewarded. Where the departure of a lead guitar player and songwriter that helped define the sound of a band would crush most, Haste the Day seems to have struck a new creative vein that revitalized the band and stretched their musicianship.

"When we lost Jason it was a huge shock for us, we didn't know what to do, because he was a primary songwriter, so we kind of just stepped back and Steven really stepped up. He was the primary songwriter on the new record and he did such a great job. Jason had a real rock and roll vibe to his guitar playing and Steven has a darker, heavier vibe to it, that's obviously a change to anyone listening to the new record. As far the singing parts, which are very important to Haste the Day, we tried to make way more intense."

"We definitely think it is the best thing we've ever done. We've always been a band that combines the heavy music with the melodic side of music and we think that we have kind of combined those in the best way thus far that we think is the heaviest record we've done and it's also the most melodic and catchiest record we've done. So we've kind of matured in a way where that balance makes more sense. It's a really heavy record and it's really dark and people that we've shown it to, who have been fans since *Burning Bridges*, they say that it reminds them of the heaviness and intensity of *Burning Bridges*, but, you know, it also sounds like the melodic Haste the Day that's on *When Everything Falls* and *Pressure the Hinges*. So it's just a really good marriage of all the records and the best."

The energy and excitement the band has about their new material is deepened by a strong, reassured confidence amidst the struggles. Although the path has been difficult and unsure at times, the quality of the new record and rekindled energy is a testament to Haste the Day's admirable perseverance and the goodness of God's grace during trials.

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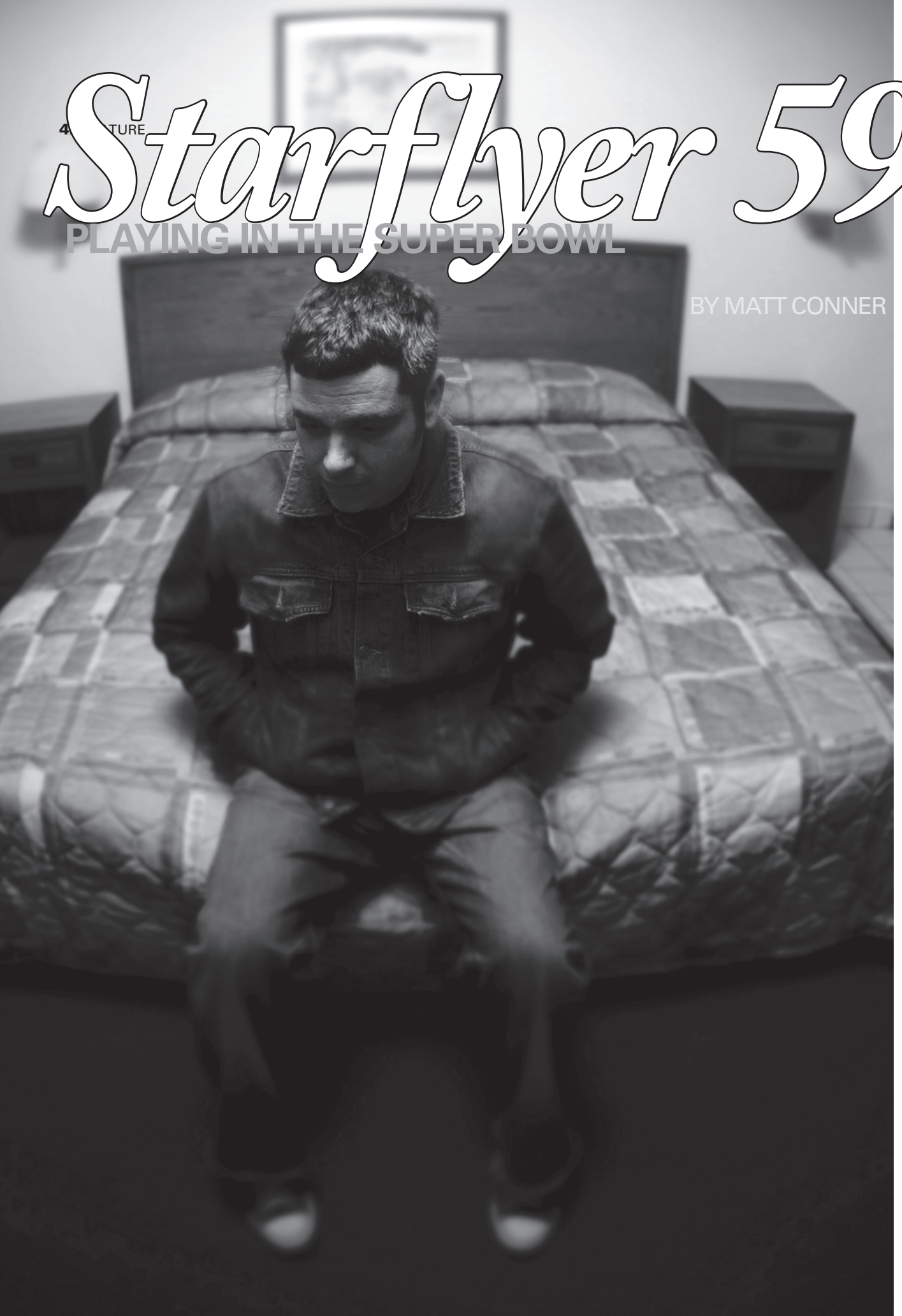
Starflyer 59

PLAYING IN THE SUPER BOWL

BY MATT CONNER



If you've been around for a while, you know that the revolving door at Tooth & Nail certainly rotates quite a bit. Numerous bands have come and gone in the label's storied history, but one constant remains: Jason Martin. The man behind Starflyer 59 has been at it for as long as the label – 1993 – and certainly never believed he'd be here this long. So it's interesting to note that *Dial M*, his latest creation, stands as one of his finest.

"I have been doing this for a long time. An unbelievably long time. An unfortunate amount of time," laughs Martin from his home/studio. "I'm always going for something and I think I got pretty close on [*Dial M*] as far as what's in my head. But there's always something on every record you put out that you want to change. You say, 'Oh, I should have put in this song or taken this song in a different direction.'"

Even with the inevitable missteps that come with hindsight, Martin insists in pursuing the ideal recording, even if it remains the elusive carrot.

"I don't even know if there's such a thing as the perfect record. But in my head, if I can ever put (out) one that I am extremely top to bottom into, I will stop making records. But I haven't done that yet. It's like a football player trying to win the Super Bowl. In my own opinion, I haven't gotten there yet. But I do like this record. I made the playoffs on this one.

"When I'm doing those things, I'm living and breathing those things for a couple months," Martin continues. "But I also know that you have to take it for what it is. When you're a kid putting out records, you think it's the greatest thing ever done. But you can only tell how good a record is if you listen to it a few years later and you can stand getting through it. My personal tastes on most of my records is that there have been some good moments, but mostly it's like, 'Eh, I don't know.' So on this one, it's so hard to tell since you're so immediately close to it."

Regarding the records he's not so close to, Martin holds a much clearer perspective. As he lists his favorites, he begins to speak with clarity and confidence – opposite of the head-down, 'can we move on to something other than talking about me' tone held for most of our conversation.

"I really like the record called *The Fashion Focus*. That's been out for about 10 years now. I think that's probably my favorite record – not that I love every song, but there's just something about it. Something special went down with that one. I worked with a guy named Gene Eugene and I like the production on that one. I like a lot of the songs a lot. To me, the record has stood up reasonably well and I could stand to listen to it if I wanted to. I also like *Talking Voice vs. Singing Voice*. I actually really like that one. And I do like this new one as well. So I'd put that my top three, whatever that even means."

Perhaps Martin's reticence to discuss this most recent work stems from the fact that he mentions it's his most personal (although even that statement was one he was reluctant to include). With the tragedy of his father's passing still fresh in the writing stages, *Dial M* became a therapeutic outlet of sorts, allowing some of Martin's most impactful lyrics to come through.

"My dad passed away about a year ago and I usually don't write personal records, but this one is slightly more personal than anything I've done. I hate giving those lines, because it's really typical for the rock guy to say, 'Yeah, this album really means something.' My album might not mean anything to anybody, but there are songs on there that do really mean something to me. I really shy away from those kinds of things. Is this the deepest record to come out ever? Not at all. But there are some personal aspects on there."

Musically, Jason Martin reassures HM that his fans will remain pleased with the music on *Dial M,* even with the new lyrical directions.

"I've been making records for a long time, but I'm really happy with the way this one turned out. There's not nearly as many electric guitars and everything is really spread out. There's a lot of acoustic guitars and piano. It still sounds like Starflyer, but I was trying for a slightly different vibe on this one than we've done as far as spreading out the instruments. There's just a lot of space on this record, especially as compared to the other ones. That's really hard for me to do. I usually want to cram up every area with 50 parts. There are aspects to this that are crammed, but for the most part, I was really trying to have a lot of space on this one. There are still a ton of tracks, but I like the thing to build. So there are different ways of doing layers, letting the song build to a lot of things at the end." Space is the one thing that's hard to come by in the musical world of Martin, who has always had his hand in more projects than the middling fan can appreciate. Most recently, Jason's wife, Julie, found herself at the microphone on the duo's new outlet, Bon Voyage. It's still Martin's baby in terms of songwriting, but it allows them to simply have fun making music, which he insists is the beauty of it all.

"That project is great. My wife just sings, so it's not like we're writing together or anything. She pretty much lets me do whatever the heck I want. So we just slip up inside the studio in our house and work in there for a few days on vocals and that's pretty much it. It's pretty much just a studio project. She totally trusts me on that end of songwriting. I've always liked the way our voices sound. It's slightly Motown in the sense that we're just making jams and it's not like we're sitting up there and laboring over the writing process together."

Jason also keeps things in the family with his brother Ronnie (Joy Electric) with their side collaboration, The Brothers Martin. The duo generated significant online buzz with their debut and Jason says the door is left open for future offerings if the opportunity presents itself.

Ultimately, Jason Martin just wants to keep writing until it's all said and done – no matter the artistic outlet.

"I just love writing songs and I really love recording. That probably sounds pretty vague, but in the back of my brain, I'd love an opportunity to have a song go down in pop history for at least a week. Who knows if that will ever happen, but the idea of grasping for songs ... you never know what will happen."

✖

The Christian & Art

WITH KEMPER CRABB

The Disconnect: Why Evangelicals Make Bad Art (Part the Fourteenth)

In earlier articles we explored why it is that millions of American Evangelicals have produced such poor quality art, and discovered that this is largely due to a limited or distorted view of the Bible, or, even worse, to an unwillingness to live out and apply what *is* known from Scripture.

We've seen that a faulty view of the Holy Trinity, Who created all things to reveal knowledge of Himself (Rom. 1:18-21; Ps. 19:1-4), leads to symbols (the primary form of artistic expression) being reduced to a single meaning, rather than also expressing a nuanced nexus of interlocking, mutually-reinforcing meanings. This does violence to symbols, which were created to function in such a way as to reflect the Triune God's Nature as both One and Many, as both a Unity (or Unified Meaning) *and* a Diversity (or Collection of Meanings) simultaneously: *One* Being, *Three* Persons, neither of which is more primary.

Such a devaluation of Trinity-reflecting symbols leads to a severe compromising of the ability of an artist to create in complex and nuanced ways, and inevitably flattens and distorts the artistic view of the world. The resultant flat simplicity reduces the world from artistic complexity toward a single meaning, a "bottom line" which truly *isn't* a bottom line, because, in order to arrive at any sort of basic meaning, it is required that all the levels of the interlocking meanings of a thing be considered *together*, and, since such a flattening of symbols yields only *one* meaning, a *true* "bottom line" cannot be arrived at.

This deficient view of symbols, which denies the possibility (or importance) of multiple simultaneous symbolic meanings, leads to the erroneous view that only a *single* meaning, a bottom line, is important, that there is only *one* important mode of being to reality.

The flat uni-dimensional view of the Creator leads to a uni-dimensional view of Creation, which leads to a uni-dimensional view of the Image of God in mankind, rather than the more-sophisticated, complex, highly-nuanced view of the multi-dimensional Image of God, which reflects in humankind the God Who is not only Simple, but is also Highly Complex. This is a reduction of man, who is a little mystery made in the Image of God, Who is the Greatest Mystery, to the level of a lesser simplicity made in the image of a greater simplicity. Amongst Evangelicals, this has reinforced a view which assumes that man has only one desirable mode of being – one of happiness or ecstasy, which, in a fallen world during the process of sanctification prior to death, reflects neither reality nor God's Purposes.

Much of Evangelicalism is taken up with a quest for constant happiness, necessarily in consequence downplaying in that illegitimate quest the Biblical privilege and necessity of sharing Christ's Sufferings (1 Peter 4:12-13; 5:10; Phil. 1:29; Rom. 8:17; etc.). Not only does this outlook do severe damage to Biblical notions of sanctification and discipleship, and trivialize the experience of happiness and ecstasy, which are a normal part of Christian life, but it also subverts Christian art by limiting its expression to *only* those aspects which seek or glorify happiness or ecstasy, restricting artistic manifestations which address the other legitimate dimensions of life which Christians experience in the world: sorrow, anger, resolution, resignation, etc. This massively hampers the intended range of artistic address and expression, cheapening our art.

This viewpoint also assaults (with the pernicious help of dispensationalism's view of the Old Testament's irrelevance for Christians) the value of all the various moods and modes of the different literary expressions of Scripture, such as the laments in the Prophets and the Psalms, the apocalyptic elements in the Gospels and the Prophets, the maledictions in the Psalms, the validity of the ethical stipulations in the Law and the Gospels, and so forth.

Besides the catastrophic implications of this assault for the fullness of the Faith, it also limits both content and artistic example in terms of addressing the complete range of experience and theology for Christian artists. This is a great tragedy, which partially flows from, and is reinforced by a deficient Doctrine of the Triune God of Scripture. Ideas have consequences.

[kempercrabb.net]

The way I see it
Chris Wighaman

Have you ever thought about how amazing our bodies are? The way our heart beats all on its own; the way our eyes receive information and send it to the brain to process so we can see; or how our limbs move around freely with nothing more than a thought.

There are, of course, the "Rock stars" of the body who receive all the attention: the brain, eyes, muscles, skeleton and heart. But what about some of the "support" staff in the body? Like, have you ever thought about why we have hair in our nose? Seriously, isn't it odd that we grow hair there? Would you ever have imagined that nose hair exists for more reasons than simply keeping nose hair clipper companies in business? Nose hair is actually quite useful to us. First off, it is the first line of defense against germs, bacteria, and allergens. Since we breathe mostly through our nose, the hair in it – along with the mucus [or snot for those of you less sophisticated] – catches and traps potential threats in our nose before they ever make their way into the body. Have you ever noticed that if your nose is feeling a little "dry" that the back of your throat is scratchy? This happens because the same combination of hair and mucus serves as a humidifier for the air we breathe. This is necessary, because normal air can be too dry for the larynx and throat. [Wow, I made it through that whole description without making a booger joke, whew.]

The church in Corinth had some issues; just read through Paul's letters to them. Their inability to get along as a group led to one of the most vivid illustrations of what it means to be followers of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul writes about what it looks like to live out this relationship with Christ we have as a community and the image he gives to base it off of is the Body. Just as all the parts of our bodies are interdependent in form and function, we too rely on one another in so many different ways. Our uniqueness is not meant to divide us, but to help the overall community function. This 'body' of believers that we form celebrates not only our individuality, but more importantly, our commonality. Paul was reminding the Corinthians that they were all one in Christ. It seems we often times need this same reminder. The God who called you to follow Him has called many more as well. They don't look the same as you, there are plenty of "nose hairs" out there, but we are meant to be united with each other in Christ.

Devotions
with Greg Tucker

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed,
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.
–Colossians 3:17a

As a boy growing up in Central Illinois my career goals were pretty straightforward: I wanted to drive fast and I wanted to shoot people. Of course, I assumed that would have something to do with being a cop, but my friend Jerry Addison had the same hopes, and today he's "Illinois Department of Corrections Inmate 4591630." God bless him, Jerry was always good about reaching his goals.

Over time, my vocational dream changed and today I have two jobs, neither of which requires my carrying a gun. I pastor the church my wife and I started six years ago (you can see my smiling mug at HopeCCA.com), and I own a film production company.

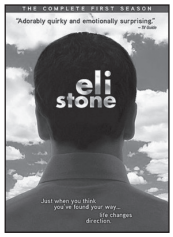
Let me be clear that my first love is the church – nothing gives me greater joy than preaching on a Sunday or leading college students in Bible study Tuesday nights – but because our fellowship is relatively small, it doesn't pay enough to support a family in Southern California. That's why I have the other job. Tucker Signature Films is a family-owned business God has clearly blessed, and the money I make there allows me to spend time pastoring here. The word for having two jobs is bivocational.

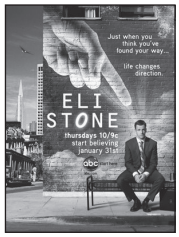
The Apostle Paul was bivocational. His passion was to be an evangelist, but he also gigged as a tentmaker to make money on the side. (Acts 18:1-4) And if his experience was anything like mine, those hours spent in the real world made him a much better minister.

How many jobs do you have? Sometimes when a musician realizes, "Okay, so maybe I'm NOT going to be the next Paul McCartney," he throws his dream away and surrenders to an unfulfilling life doing Plan B, but that needn't be the case. If God has given you a talent and interest for music but the touring thing isn't panning out, my advice for you is to give up. Not give up the dream, but (rather) the fight. It's 100% okay for you to commit to your music ministry while you work somewhere else making a living. Lots of people do it, and my guess is it will make you a better musician and a better worker. That's just the way things go when you're doing everything for Him.

[Greg Tucker lives in your computer at www.HopeCCA.com]

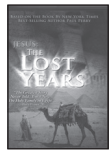
Entertainment reviews
DVDS, BOOKS & GADGETS


THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON
"Adorably quirky and emotionally surprising."
eli stone
Just when you think you've found your way... life changes direction.



01 ELI STONE
ABC STUDIOS

I guess being a big-shot lawyer isn't what it's cracked up to be after all. When lawyer Eli Stone's high-class life is interrupted by hallucinations so vivid that he jumps right into them, his life gets turned upside down. Upon finding out that these hallucinations are caused by the same brain aneurysm that his father suffered from, Eli begins to believe that maybe these hallucinations aren't just symptoms, but explores the possibility that they may be divine visions. Since first having a 'vision' Eli gains a strong conviction to help out the 'underdog' cases at his law firm that is known for chewing up the little guy and he begins to pass up chances to reel in the big bucks. With each vision he gets, a client comes along in need of Eli's expertise on law. Eli is able to solve the cases from his 'visions,' and a little help from his acupuncturist who helps trigger memories from the past. *Eli Stone* could easily be seen as a controversial series as this is bringing a hint of God into the courtroom and dealing with cases that are worldly related and against Christian values. This will definitely stir up conversation about believing in something for the greater good and testing your measure of faith. Overall this is a very enjoyable and well-produced show, after watching this first season you will feel like you know the characters and will be anxious to see what happens next. *Laurel Erickson*



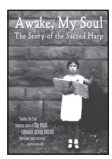
02 JESUS: THE LOST YEARS *BENT PYRAMID*
Pulling from Paul Perry's bestselling book, this journey investigates the five years of Jesus' life undocumented in Scripture. Through historical research, oral tradition, factual evidence and the help of prominent religious leaders, it's a fascinating must for those who want to know all they can about Jesus' earthly life. *Levi Macallister*

03 GET THRASHED *WARNER BROS.*
Metallica. Exodus. Slayer. Pantera. This documentary on Thrash Metal history, as per the artists themselves, is one of those educational things that you're actually excited to learn. From culture to clothing, San Fran to Germany, if you can handle the language, it's definitely worth the watch. *LM*

04 YOUNG @ HEART *FOX VIDEO*
These 90-somethings tackle everything from the Ramones' "...Sedated" to Coldplay's "Fix You." As a fan says, "You'll never complain about being too old or tired again." No matter what your age, this feel-good doc will warm your heart and leave you with sore cheeks by the end, as you hadn't realized you were smiling the whole time. *LM*

05 YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN *COLUMBIA PICTURES*
I wouldn't want to mess with Adam Sandler's character, a well-known Israeli counter-terrorist agent who flees his homeland to pursue dreams of becoming a hair-stylist in NYC. If you can manage to look past the sexual humor – which makes up over half the movie – then the plot is creative and worth more than a few laughs. *LE*

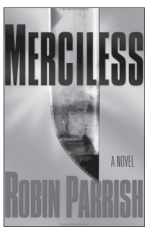
06 IRON MAN *PARAMOUNT*
Robert Downey Jr. plays an arrogant bazillionaire with a lot of flair and attitude, but suffering as a prisoner of war still grabs sympathy for about any viewer, so when he becomes Iron Man, which takes 3/4 of the movie it seems, it's really easy to root for him. CGI-effects aside, a pretty rad film. *Doug Van Pelt*



07 AWAKE, MY SOUL *AWAKE PRODUCTIONS*
This film would fit perfectly into a Music Appreciation course. While it's no thriller, this highly informative piece on South-roots shape-note a cappella focuses on the history of *The Sacred Harp*, a 160 yr. old hymnal, which holds some of the oldest songs in America. *LM*

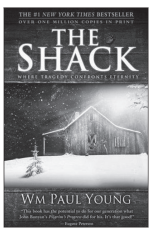
08 WAR GAMES: THE DEAD CODE *MGM*
I watched this less than 24-hours after viewing the epic *Dark Knight*, and I honestly still felt entertained and taken on a fairly-thrilling tale/ride. With big-time storylines (like nuclear warheads exploding on our soil) being played out by *Dr. Who* quality talent, it's still quite entertaining. Not much for extras or special effects, but cool nonetheless. *DV*

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
SPIRITUAL RELEVANCY (%)	100	100	20	80	40	50	100	40
OBSCENITIES	15		49	1	13			
SCENES OF GORE								
NUDITY / SEXUALITY	12		1		9	2		



Merciless
Robin Parrish – Bethany House

I read this novel in two days. That alone should tell you something about this book. It kept my attention and there was never a good stopping point. The action is mostly nonstop from beginning to end. This is the third book in a series. It follows *Relentless* and *Fearless*. I think anyone who had not read the first two in the series would be a bit lost and not enjoy this installment. There is a mix of Bible prophecy in this book that could upset some. I just take the book as I believe it was meant to be: A work of fiction. Not the truth of God's word. In fiction, I look for books that keep me interested and make me care about the characters. I found this book to be quite compelling. *Charlotta Van Pelt*



The Shack
William P. Young – Windblown Media

How many of you, when you hear the word "God" think: "Fat black woman who cooks extravagant meals complete with rare greens that trigger irritable bowel movement for her disillusioned children, her ugly son, and her semi-solid spiritual completion to the holy trinity?" As sacrilegious as that picture may sound, Young's fiction about one man's beautiful weekend with God has been called the *Pilgrim's Progress* of this generation, and the result is anything but offensive. This engaging read takes us into the depths of Mack's heart – his suffering, his joy, his anger, his redemption – and the relationship he builds with his tangible savior. A hugely conversational piece that explores the questions central to our human longings through actual interaction and discussion with the triune God "themselves" – this beautiful portrait of a relationship with Love, personified, will not fail to inspire the reader the way it inspired its characters. *Levi Macallister*

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Gadgets
Logitech, Coolit Systems, Waves, & mStation

Logi-Tech® keeps making strides in their iPod players. The **Pure-Fi Dream** (01) delivers a killer bass response and features a motion-sensor that allows a sleeper to wave their hand over the unit to put it to "sleep." At this price ($199), think twice before you plunk down $300 for the Bose system. The **Squeezebox Boom** (02) can line-in play an iPod, but its main job is to wirelessly access and play tunes from a hard drive in the house, allowing access to internet radio and services like Rhapsody® – effectively giving you an unlimited jukebox experience. Get the future now ($299). Unreal. Now that we're sponsored by Monster Energy Drink®, we need desktop coolers (03), like the **Cool It Chiller** ($24), which plugs into your USB port and keeps beverages chilled from the bottom to 40°. (04) Waves' **iGTR** "personal guitar processor" ($79) is totally rad. With my zero guitar skills I can sound like a distortion master (in my headphones), so a real player could love this mini-effects unit that clips onto your belt. (05) mStation's **Orb** is one of the cooler iPod speaker systems around. The sound is pretty full, exceeding the econo models. At $129, it'd be nice if it had a beefier low-end bass, but it'll still pack a room w/ sound *DV*

[logitech.com, coolitsystems.com, waves.com/igtr, mstationaudio.com]

What **Everclear** Says

REMEMBER THE EVERCLEAR SONGS, "WONDERFUL," "HEROINE GIRL" OR "SANTA MONICA?" WELL, THE MULTI-HIT BAND KEEPS PLUGGING ALONG. I SAW A PRESS RELEASE A COUPLE MONTHS AGO ABOUT THE BAND DOING A FUND-RAISER FOR THE MARS HILL CHURCH AND MY CHRISTIAN EARS PERKED UP. SEEMS SOMEONE IN THE BAND APPRECIATED THE CHURCH'S LAID BACK STYLE AND RESPECTED WHAT BELIEVERS WERE CALLED TO DO (HELP OTHERS). THEREFORE, IT WAS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I WAS ABLE TO GET ON THE PHONE WITH FRONTMAN ART ALEXAKIS FOR THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW.

I'm sure you've heard the Hunter S. Thompson quote about the music industry ... In the spirit of that famous quote what is the most wretched, ugly and foul thing that you've seen in the business world we call entertainment?
I'm in the process of trying to transition over into film and make movies. I went to film school 20-some years ago and I've been making short films and made a lot of our videos, so now I'm dealing with a whole new data shark. And it's a shark that makes the shark in the, um, music business look like guppies.

Wow.
Because … well, it's about the money – there's much more money. An indie movie costs half a million dollars to a million dollars, an indie record costs ten to twenty thousand dollars to make. And you do the math. The size of carnivores that surround that money are, um, bigger and scarier. But in the record industry … I think, the most disgusting… See, I never take that stuff seriously. I had the president of the label call me a (bleep) once, 'cause I wouldn't do a show for him. He wanted me to get off the middle of my tour, Everclear, you know, blow off three shows that were gonna ... were already sold out – so, I'd have to disappoint all those bands, piss off the promoters, lose all that money – and fly in to a private gig for his friend. And I'm like, "No!" So he called me a bunch of names including a (bleep) and I always thought it was funny that I got called a (bleep) by the president at the label.

Well, on the contrary, what's one of the absolutely coolest and most refreshing things you've ever seen in this biz?
Well, one of the coolest things that ever happened was when we were doing our video for a song called "A.M. Radio" – I don't know if you ever saw it – but, uh, we morphed a lot of, like, old TV shows from the seventies and we had to get rights and pay for rights from all of these different shows from *The Brady Bunch*, um, *Kojak*...

I think I remember that.
Yeah, and … man, everybody was so ... whoever the holding companies were, they were so ... so expensive, just for like a ten second clip of *The Brady Bunch*, or a twenty second clip it was like, twenty five grand. And one of the coolest things was Marty Kroft – from Sid and Marty Kroft – let us use as much as he wanted from his old Saturday morning TV show and he didn't charge us a dime, not a dime. And, uh, that's just … he's just an old school guy who wants to do fun things and figures if his stuff is out there it's getting some attention, you know? Um, I don't know, there's been a few cases of that. I haven't run into too much wonderfulness in people, in the entertainment business.

Well, what are some of the secrets of longevity in an artist or a band, but specifically in your case, as well as what you'd recommend to a young artist?
Huh. Well in my case I think it's just that, I just don't know when to quit. I still feel the fire in my belly; I think that's the prerequisite – that you still have a passion for what you do. Um, that you can still stay current and connected with people. I really love the internet, because that's a way of staying connected with people. For other people? For younger bands, I think if you really want to have a career as a musician or an entertainer or as an artist in some way, you've got to be driven, man; you've got to want it so bad. You can't let defeats get in your way, you know? You put yourself out on the line and people are going to criticize you. And sometimes it's going to be good criticism; sometimes it's going to be horrific. You've got to be able to weather it. The people that are still here after all these years, myself included, are people that have taken off, done really well, had some defeats and some failures and come back from it. Just don't let it get you down. I think that's true in any business – not just in entertainment – or in any life. If you really want to have a successful life, you have to be able to pick yourself up when you get knocked down. Or when you knock yourself down, when you fall down... So, I was watching a TV show that kind of reminds me of that, I was speaking to my fiancée about that actually just a couple hours ago.

and they have different views on exactly what He meant when He said those things. But if you take it at face value, I think it makes a lot sense. It truly says that He is God, right?

Yeah, in the context, He … people picked up stones to kill Him when He said stuff like that.
Well, yeah! Well that's pretty bold!

Yeah.
Yeah that's pretty bold. You know, customer comes up and says, "I'm God. Hey, the only way you're going to get to God is through me." If that happened today, we, people would kill 'em. Yep.

Out of all the cover tunes on The Vegas Years, which ones would you say you have the funnest time performing?
Probably "Bad Connection" or "The Boys are Back in Town." Or, um, no, no, no, no! I'd have to say "Jenny," – "8675309 Jenny," because I bring girls up on stage every time and, watching them dance and jump around and act crazy and watching people in the audience watching them … It's like performance art. You never know how it's gonna end up. It's fun.

What is the last thing you and your bandmates do before you go up on stage?
What do we do together? We don't do anything together. We're just kinda chilling out, talking a little bit. Um, the last thing I do is I pray. I pray before I go on stage. I warm up my vocals. Um … we all stretch out. You know, physically. Go over the setlist and stuff like that, but as I'm getting ready to walk to stage I pray, and open my heart up, and my mind and just hope good things are going to come through me. That's the story. Never told anyone that, actually.

What are some of the things you used to complain about as an artist ten or twenty years ago and which of those things would you probably not complain about if you lived through those years again?
Wow, that's a really good question. To be honest with you, I'm not a complainer – I never have been. I've never been one to complain. And, I don't think I complained about anything. There were some things I didn't like, but I didn't really complain about them. And, um, there's nothing looking back … I don't have any regrets as far as the music goes. I have other regrets in my personal life that are private, but not in music. I love the whole light, I love the whole trip. I'm glad I still get to be on it. I'll enjoy it until I stop.

How formidable was it for you as an artist to explore the sound and direction you did when it might not have been the most popular style of music around that time?
How formidable? I don't know, you know, I just have always… You know, it's funny – I was always doing some stuff pretty close to what we were doing and, you know, I got letter after letter from big labels, small labels, um, club owners … saying, "It's good, but it's not really what anyone wants to hear." Um, and it doesn't sound like anything on the radio, so we don't get it. And it's funny, because music on the radio started sounding more like what I was doing – probably because the people of our age had all grown up on the same kind of stuff and it just kind of moved that way. So, I think timing had a lot to do with it, as well, with our success. But also, just tenacity. I learned tenacity from my mother. She was a very tenacious woman.

Well speaking of timing, I've got a question that's kind of pertinent. Um, in the early 90s, a friend of mine from Seattle went out on tour, and before he left he could hear, say, "Rock You Like a Hurricane" by the Scorpions, followed by "Black Hole Sun" by Soundgarden. And by the time he got back from that tour, he noticed you wouldn't hear any classic metal songs on the same station. Somehow a dividing line emerged and there was like an alienation away from all things metal. How would you explain that change and what do you think about that phenomenon then and what do you think about it now, in hindsight?
Well, to be honest with you, I think that, if you judge by what's going on in radio now, there's a lot of these hybrid stations that are playing old and new stuff together, both alternative and harder stuff, like active rock, I think you're seeing a lot more of that coming back, from what I've seen. I was in a certain city and I heard an old Everclear song and then they played a new Everclear song. I also heard on different stations, you know, like they play an old alternative song, and then they play something new, or they play an old, like, classic rock song – like a Black Sabbath song – and then something new. So, I think that's coming back, actually. But I know what you're talking about. There was a time, especially in Seattle where, you know, I think the station he was probably listening to wasn't getting enough ratings by playing the older stuff, so they switched over and all started sounding like alternative stations. Then when rap/metal came out they all started sounding like rap/metal stations, including the alternative stations. You know, they just want to play what people want to hear. Or what they… Actually, what they think people want to hear – not always exactly what people want to hear.

It's a funny business.
Uh, yeah. To say the least.

I was talking with a friend recently, and he brought up how the technology of recording music drastically changed the way artists approached music; whereas prior to that, a musical performance could only be heard in real time. This ability, which developed into recording itself, is a craft. What are some of the recording methods that you've used that you're especially fond of?
Well, I've recorded old school – like your friend was talking about – where … uh, basically, the old school recordings, say Ray Charles, and that kind of stuff, was a live performance. And then two-tracking became available, where you'd put one on one side, you know, when stereo came out, you could add two channels and people would just start loading stuff into the two channels like the early Beatles and stuff like that, into the later Fifties. I've done pretty much everything, you know? From live recording to two-track to eight-track, sixteen-track, and now in Pro-Tools and all sorts of stuff. I think it … that's a huge, open-ended question – depending upon where you want to go with it. I've produced all different types of ways, and produced everything I've ever done.

Alright, nice. I didn't know that. Well, um, tell me a little bit more about the new recordings you're making and a little about your plans for the next year, year and a half.
Um, new recordings we're making? Like I said, we're going to start downloading some singles for purchase. Like, I tend to think … I think anyone would buy … if they're responsible? I think the days [of regular album sales] are pretty much over. And I think we're pushing through a time where people will pretty much be constantly just downloading their own music and doing things themselves without a record label. Sometimes you need to find funding and start-up money, and then just pay it back. It's like a joint venture. I think you're going to see a lot more of that. So, for the next year and a half, we are Everclear, but … I mean, because, you know, I do things that everybody doesn't do. I'm writing a book, I wrote a movie and I'm in the midst of trying to get funding for it. I want to produce it this summer. Everclear is going to put this record out – we just put this record out – we're going to tour through the summer, and probably through the fall and early next year. I want to make a new record in the winter of next year. Like, say, December, January, February. I want to make a new record. I'm working on songs; I've got about ten songs half the way there. So, keep writing through the year and hopefully I'll have twenty finished songs ready to record. And then, after that, who knows? We'll see. I try not to live that far ahead.

"I think the church needs to be shook up a little bit. Actually, a little bit more than a little bit. I think there should be a lot of shaking up going on, and I think it's going be hard."

Yeah.
It's more fun to live in the moment. Not for the moment, but in the moment, you know?

Right. Right on.
It's a lot more fun. Hey man, it was great talking to you.

Likewise, I appreciate it. Hopefully I can see you up on tour sometime, that'd be great.
Yeah, man, that'd be cool. Come on up and check us out sometime.

✖

Well I got one more question about the music business. I wasn't purposefully trying to come up with all these business questions, but they just kind of flowed when I was composing these. What's one surprising thing about a career in music that no one warned you about?
One surprising thing? Well, one's gonna… I mean, no one can really warn you. Because unless you hang out with famous people no one can really know what it's going to be like and I've never really talked to anyone famous. I mean, most people have an idea what fame and success as an entertainer is gonna be. You know, you have these pictures in your mind of what it's going to be like. And I don't think anything in this world is ever how we picture it. You can get close to it, but I don't think that you ever nail it. I think the biggest surprise for me was how much I was going to miss my lack of privacy. I really have always been a really private person, never really wanted to be famous. I wanted to be good and successful, make a decent living. But the whole fame thing of being recognized – I get recognized a lot – is, uh, you know … it depends upon your mood. If you're in a good mood, it's great. If you're not in a good mood, it's not. But it doesn't matter, because you still have to be there for … you know, you still have to deal with it. And you have to deal with it in a good way and a compassionate way. Sometimes it's easier than other times. It's a good problem to have, you know, don't get me wrong. It's not like I'm a poor little rich boy (bleep) about what a bummer it is that people like what I do. It's just there's times when I'm trying to change a diaper and people are, um, just really rude at the airport trying to, you know, push my wife out of the way so they can get up and talk to me while I'm trying to change a diaper. That's a bit, um, a bit of a nuisance. Other than that, it's pretty cool.

How often do you buy new music and how much? What are some of your most recent purchases and what do you think of them?
New music? Define new music. Do you mean contemporary new music?

Well, uh, you know. I guess, uh…
Cause I buy music almost every day…

Yeah, new releases.
Um, I listen to new releases probably every week. Me and my teenage daughter will buy a lot off of iTunes and I like to go to record stores at least once a week and whenever I'm in a new town, which is usually once or twice a week I tend to go to record stores or bookstores. So, I've been checking stuff out. I just haven't been liking what I'm hearing or buying it. I think the last album I liked, um … somewhat, was the new Kings of Leon record, when that came out. I liked a couple songs off of it, and I've listened to it a few times. But I actually bought the hard copy of that. I'm trying to think of what else I bought lately. Oh! I bought the new Jack Johnson. The great thing about buying stuff off iTunes or Rhapsody is that, man, you can find any song you've ever heard just about, you know, and you can buy it – just that song. And I tend to spend a couple hundred bucks a week – between me and my daughter, I will justify that, between me and my daughter – and my girlfriend. We all buy stuff online. And, you know, my daughter will call me after school saying she wants to go to the record store with her friend and, you know, can she spend her lunch money for the next day? I'll give it back to her, you know, we're an entertainment buying family. I don't wait for the record label. I don't ask people for free records like a lot of people do from the industry – never have, even when I didn't have money. Too much pride and not enough wallet.

Why did you donate proceeds from your April concert to New Horizon Industries over the Mars Hill Church?
Well, because, um… why? I mean, that's… I don't get the question. I mean, why wouldn't you?

What was the reason? What was the inspiration?
Huh?

What was the inspiration or reason you, uh…
Well, we were playing a church. Um, a friend of mine goes to this church and they're basically, um, almost "new-thought" Christianity. I consider myself a Christian, I always have, I just don't necessarily see eye-to-eye with a large majority of people who call themselves Christians. Especially evangelical Christians. Um … fundamentalists. We just don't see eye-to-eye. Mars Hill is church that's … instead of being very conservative, politically, they're a lot more liberal politically, and tend to stay out of the whole political arena, which I think a church should do. And when they asked me to do a show, I said, "That'd be great. Do you want me to do this as a benefit for you guys?" They said, "No, let's do it as a benefit for someone else." They came up with two or three different options, and I know about New Horizon, because I, you know, I've been out on the street before, and that's a marvel that's worked for, like, almost thirty years I think. Up in Seattle.

Wow.
Yeah, they're pretty amazing. It was a good thing all the way around. It was fun.

That's cool. What do you think of Jesus Christ?
Well I'm writing a song called … it's going to be a first single for download. It's going to be called "Jesus was a democrat."

Wow. Cool.
Yeah, I think Jesus Christ is awesome. I don't know about the people that have been bandying his name around for a couple thousand years. I don't think they've all been that great. There have been good people. But, uh, I think that He was pretty cool. I think He was a very liberal and very loving, very accepting person that was embodied with God – like we all are. And, uh, He knew it. Gave Himself away. I think He had a lot of lessons we could all learn from, myself included, definitely. What do you think of Jesus Christ?

Well, I would agree with the things you said about. Um, I think that … that He claimed to be God in the flesh and I believe that and want to kind of have the discipline of a Buddhist. The social, um, justice, mindset of um … a Nun. And I want to have the humility of a Navaho Indian. But I choose to cling to, trust in, and rely on Christ. So, uh…
Wow man, I couldn't say that any better.

Ha ha.
I would've thrown in the passion of a follower of Islam.

Yeah.
Yeah! I think … I think that's pretty cool. I think that's really cool. I, um, I think the church needs to be shook up a little bit. Actually, a little bit more than a little bit. I think there should be a lot of shaking up going on, and I think it's going to be hard. People don't ... you know, people like to sit back and think that they can call themselves whatever and they are what they are, and it doesn't work like that. It's going to be interesting, you should listen to my song when it comes out. You can buy it for a buck.

I will. Like right now, or eventually?
No, it's gonna be out in June. I'm getting ready to record it. I can't make up my mind as to whether to call it "Jesus Was a Democrat" or "Jesus Was Liberal." I think "democrat" will piss more people off.

Ha ha ha.
'Cause that's what's important.

Yeah. You might want to go with that one for that reason. I would uh … as a spiritual thing, I would love it… If you would call me a Christian, instead of me calling myself a Christian. The whole definition of the word is "Christ-like" or "Little Jesus" and it's kind of a pompous thing to say about yourself, but it's a compliment.
Well, you know the original Christians called themselves followers of Christ. And probably by the second… I think the late second century, A.D., um, they were dubbed Christians by other people. Um, so… yeah, I know what you mean. I know what you're saying. It's one of those things that, to me … you make it what you want it to be. To me, being a Christian is being a follower of Christ. I want to emulate, um, the teachings – practice the teachings – and emulate the life of Christ. His choices. And look at life the way that He did. I think that if more people truly did that, regardless of what they call themselves, I think it would be a safer place to live. I was raised in a very evangelical, born again, um, "Holy-Roller," um, Assembly of God-type environment. So, I grew up right in the middle of the snakepit, pretty much.

What do you think of His claims to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life – no one comes to the Father but by Me?"
Um, what do you mean, what do I think about it? That's red-letter, right?

Yep.
Straight out of the Bible, that's what He said…what do you mean, "What do I think about it?"

That's a little bit of a different angle than what you think of the church, or religion or, you know…
I'm sorry?

It's a little bit of a different question or angle than asking you about your religious heritage or, uh, upbringing.
Oh, um, what do I think about it? Well, I think it's … you know, I think it's Jesus' words. I think it's, um … the focal point, you know? He's the way in. You know, I gotta say, I am a Christian, but I also know that a lot went on back in 421 A.D. when they were writing all this stuff. I would really like to see exactly what Jesus said and how He said it. I wish I could read in Aramaic. I can't. But I know a lot of people who are scholars

Pomegranates
Everything Is Alive.
"The comparisons to early Modest Mouse are pretty spot-on so long as that s not the last word. Pomegranates sonic template is much wider, their pop, poppier. -KEXP Blog"

The Out Circuit
Pierce The Empire
With A Sound
"The sophomore effort from former member of Frodus, Nathan Burke, features collaborations with Dustin Kensrue of Thrice, Sean Ingram of Coalesce, and Rachel Burke of Beauty Pill, as well as contributions from Roadside Monument, The Epochs, Haram and more!"

The Dark Romantics
Heartbreaker.
The second release from Eric Collins (Denison Marrs / The Party People) and crew finds them perfecting their songcraft and sound with brilliant arrangements and epic instrumentation.

Cool Hand Luke.
The Sleeping House.
The long awaited full length release of all new material from this beloved and critically acclaimed band. It s darker, more beautiful, and even more grand than their previous efforts.

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STARFLYER 59

DIAL M

Starflyer 59 has always seemed like a band shrouded in mystery. Lots of folks dropped the name around, but never seemed to have the albums lying about, nor could they ever really describe what listening to Starflyer 59 was like. Rumors went alongside their evolution in style and sound (a roommate told me once that all the members worked as truck drivers – a claim that seems dubious but that is still totally awesome). With *Dial M*, SF59 embraces that sense of mystery. It sounds like how the cover art looks – Art Deco and shrouded in a hazy, crime novel fog. If Hitchcock were making films today, this would be a grand starting place for a soundtrack. Front man Jason Martin's gravelly smooth vocals and dense lyrics sneak around with a paranoid world-weariness, as if danger were around every corner. The sonic textures are tasteful and clean, with beautifully arranged strings covering the nooks and crannies like a blanket. With stylistic nods to Interpol and The Smiths, there isn't a bad tune in the bunch, nor is there one that settles for immediate gratification. Rather, *Dial M* rewards the listener who spends some quality time immersed in the experience. Not unlike a good book…

~~[TOOTH & NAIL] MIKE HOGAN~~

DEAS VAIL

WHITE LIGHTS EP

Deas Vail's debut, *All The Houses Look The Same*, received my vote for strongest debut of 2007. The primary reason being vocalist Wes Blaylock was the best new voice I'd heard in a long time. The band's follow-up EP, *White Lights*, only confirms that initial impression. The five new tracks turn down the Coldplay and Death Cab influences, which is a good thing for a band trying to find their own way. "Balance" utilizes a decent string arrangement to find a Sleeping at Last vibe and "Undercover" reminds of The Myriad with its modern rock guitar tones. Yet it's Blaylock's falsetto that still holds the most sway and the band wisely places him front and center. ~~[BRAVE NEW WORLD] MATT CONNER~~

SAM PHILLIPS

DON'T DO ANYTHING

Sam Phillips has had an acerbic streak about her at least since she switched her non du disc from Leslie a couple decades ago. In what sounds to be a concept album about marital break up (hers and T Bone Burnett's?), that acidity mixes with dark whimsy and a sonic palette with more folky and rockin' hues than the austerity marking the chamber pop of her last two longplayers. It's still weird – though she should be cleaning up at commercial hard rock radio – but here Phillips occasionally threatens to rawk out. Shame about her and Teeb', but perchance what methinks is a tart fruit of their dissolution can help others navigate their own matrimonial messes. Or make for a sulking good time in an unfortunate aftermath itself? ~~[NONESUCH] JAMIE LEE RAKE~~

AUSTRIAN DEATH MACHINE

TOTAL BRUTAL

Before Chuck Norris became legend, destroying criminals as the invincible Texas Ranger; before Vin Diesel learned how to drive; before Bruce Willis shot up the skies of New York City; one young Austrian traveled to the Land of Opportunity to pursue a dream. Little did he know, he would change the world of action heroes forever. Embodying everything metal before metal came to be, Arnold Schwarzenegger finally gets his due praise in the form of Tim Lambesis' solo project, Austrian Death Machine. In the ultimate of all tribute albums, Lambesis, with the help of a Schwarzenegger impersonator, records some of the Austrian Oak's most famous quotes… over music almost as brutal as he is. Taking the term "solo record" to a new level, the multitalented As I Lay Dying frontman wrote the album, performed all the instruments, and recorded it in his own home studio in between tours. Such haste, under any usual circumstance, would yield unfinished work at best, but in Lambesis' case, it just shows brilliance. The music is straight up metal, as fast, thrashy, and heavy as he could write. Though less accessible than the tunes of As I Lay Dying, the songs of *Total Brutal* are just as impressive in their own right. Lambesis is a master songwriter with a great sense of humor who has achieved a near perfect balance between fun and quality. ~~[METAL BLADE] JOHN MCENTIRE~~

FAMILY FORCE 5

DANCE OR DIE

When Family Force 5 premiered their crunk rock hybrid on their full-length debut *Business Up Front*, *Party In The Back*, they brought a completely different style of music to the commercial market. Instead of piggybacking off Fall Out Boy and My Chemical Romance, the Atlanta-based entourage took the core of rock 'n roll and mixed it with Lil' Jon's hometown brew, but it was more nightclub appropriate than rap metal. Two years later and the sextet of Christian white boys are using the same tactic on their threatening-titled sophomore set *Dance Or Die* (via Tooth & Nail), except it isn't as heavy. Really, there isn't another rock band that can spice up the dance floor as well as Family Force 5. Amidst the conglomeration of innocent vivacious bangers like "Fever" and "Get Your Back Off The Wall," the troupe's patent crunkness is sparingly replaced with placid melodies, which add more emotional depth to "Share It With Me." But that also causes the six-piece groove machine to have some glitches, like with the stargazing love ballad "How In The World." It sounds like a terrible pop song that wasn't good enough to appear on an Enrique Iglesias album. Despite the few hokey prom songs, Family Force has created an energetic album that appeals to the mainstream without compromising their artistic integrity. With *Dance Or Die*, these six Christian white boys have officially launched the crunk rock movement. Now, it's only a matter of time before some no-name band piggybacks off of them.

~~[GOTEE/TOOTH & NAIL] BEAR FRAZER~~

JONEZETTA

CRUEL TO BE YOUNG

After listening to *Cruel To Be Young*, the sophomore release from Mississippi rockers Jonezetta, I had to dig out *Popularity*, their full-length debut to make sure it was the same band. *Cruel To Be Young* is a huge leap forward stylistically and musically with exceptional songwriting and production. The boys apparently decided to stretch a bit on this one and get more artistic, as with the brilliant "Sick In The Teeth," easily their best song with its memorable hook, cool vibe and clever lyrics. The sounds on this album are hard to nail down because there's a unique quality to each one with a mix of styles that incorporates keys, guitars, great melodies and amazing production. Check out the closing track, "Window" and the attached bonus track, you will be amazed that a young indie-rock band could be this creative, with the organ/accordion sounds and amazing vocals that sound like something from Arcade Fire or Polyphonic Spree. Another standout track is huge potential hit "Holding On To You," which sounds like Fountains of Wayne meets Fall Out Boy. This record should be a critical and commercial success and you will definitely see it on some year-end Top Ten lists.

~~[TOOTH & NAIL] DR. TONY SHORE~~

Ratings

	DV	Writer
Starflyer 59 *Dial M*	04	04*
Deas Vail *White Lights* EP	04	04
Sam Phillips *Don't Do Anything*	03*	04
Austrian Death Machine *Total Brutal*	04*	04
Family Force 5 *Dance Or Die*	04	03*
Jonezetta *Cruel to be Young*	04	04
Resurrection Band *Music To Raise The Dead 1972-1998*	04	
Johnny Cash *At Folsom Prison*	04	
David Crowder Band *Remedy Club Tour Edition* CD/DVD	04	03*
The Dark Romantics *Heartbreaker*	03	02*
Alice Cooper *Along Came A Spider*	03	03
Philmont *Oh Snap!*	03	04
After The Sirens *What I Have To Give, Let It Be Enough*	03	04
Copeland *You Are My Sunshine*	03*	04*
Wrench In The Works *Lost Art Of Heaping Coal*	04	03*
Haste The Day *Dreamer*	04	04

RESURRECTION BAND

MUSIC TO RAISE THE DEAD 1972-1998

While maybe just a few notches below "Great American rock band" status, this hard rockin' outfit wasn't anything to sneeze at. Their recorded output is well represented here, with cuts from all 14 albums and even includes "Quite Enough" from their 1974 demo. Whoever chose the tracks from each album did a fantastic job pulling the gems out. Some of the highlights included are: "Waves," along with the radio dj voice introduction of "Resurrection Band!?! How did this get in the racks? Oh well, here's hoping!" "Afrikaans" and its companion piece recorded years later – "Zuid Afrikan;" the punkish "Alienated;" the metallic "White Noise;" "Rooster Crow;" "Light/Light;" "Lincoln's Train;" the Jefferson Airplane cover of "Somebody To Love" (I bet getting the rights to The Who's cover, "Bargain" was too much of a hassle to get included here); and probably the greatest song of their careers – the chilling "Shadows." The fourth disc is a DVD, including videos of "Crimes" and "Love Comes Down," as well as previously unreleased live footage from its *Twenty Years* live commemorative concert. Along with its expert song choices, this DVD and the lengthy liner notes in the 80-page CD booklet are what make this boxset truly special. And, in the spirit of the band's personality, the DVD includes bonus concert sermons from both Glenn and Wendy Kaiser. For the band's career and the compilation of this boxset, the appropriate response is: job well done. ~~[GRRR]~~ DOUG VAN PELT

JOHNNY CASH

AT FOLSOM PRISON [LEGACY EDITION]

After seeing the great Johnny Cash film, *Walk The Line*, this recorded concert takes on added understanding and dimension. Here on two discs are the two shows that made up that classic (and previously unheard of) live album. On it he crossed a boundary that separated performer from audience, as he identified with the men in prison. With it, he cemented himself as the epitome of blue collar music – with expletives included for the first time. A bonus DVD fills out this classy boxset with a documentary that features live footage and interviews with Merle Haggard, Rosanne Cash, Marty Stuart, and former inmates who witnessed the concert. ~~[COLUMBIA/LEGACY]~~ DOUG VAN PELT

DAVID CROWDER BAND

REMEDY CLUB TOUR EDITION

David Crowder may compete with Lyle Lovett for the kookiest Texan hairdo in show biz, but in concert he's quite the Southern gent. This live CD/DVD package captures Crowder and band doing primarily *Remedy* album material. And while it's a shame his cover of the hymn, "O, For A Thousand Tongues To Sing," is not also included, it's hard to fault Crowder's otherwise strong set list choices. Naturally, audiences won't let him exclude church favorites, such as "O Praise Him (All This For A King)," so newer songs are augmented by older ones. Crowder's silliness when introducing Jack Parker's banjo during the old "I Saw The Light" is a hoot – it's as though the instrument were an alien probing device, to be feared more than respected. But Crowder is dead serious when singing "Remedy," as he always holds out Jesus as God's ultimate cure for whatever ails mankind. ~~[SIX STEPS]~~ DAN MACINTOSH

THE DARK ROMANTICS

HEARTBREAKER

The Dark Romantics' *Heartbreaker* sounds exactly like their name implies: It's a brooding, stream-of-consciousness record that reminds me of some of the side projects I had heard in Nashville about five years ago. To that end, it's got a fairly original sound. There aren't a whole lot of people still playing indie-emo rock. It's got a Cursive-meets-Bright Eyes sound. A little melody, a little experimental. I wouldn't go out of my way to listen to it, but when it comes on randomly while I'm working, it's great background music. ~~[LUJO]~~ DAVID STAGG

ALICE COOPER

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

Please tell me *CSI* worked a marketing deal with Alice for *Along Came a Spider*. Classic rock opening? Check. Fascinating serial killer shtick? Good enough to usurp "the Miniature Killer" storyline. Theatricality? In spades. Grissom's love for bugs? "Spider" – duh. Promo materials call this disc "a dark and menacing album for dark and menacing times." Ehh…not so much. To these ears it's a fun romp through a mish mash of hard rock styles – the place where classic rock, synth-rock, big hooks, and aspiring bedroom guitar heroes converge. It sounds good – recorded well with today's tools. Listen to guest artist Slash wailing all over snarling rocker "Vengeance is Mine." An oddly propulsive, contagious beat drives the Moby-ish "Wake the Dead." More than Alan Alda ever could, Alice creeps you out with "(In Touch With) Your Feminine Side." Just when you think Vincent Furnier chucked his Sunday School class to channel his inner serial killer, Spider's career reflections erupt into the anthemic chorus, "Any chance Salvation? Any chance for me? ... In my heart, in my soul, there's something new that's very old/Like a pain that's finally gone, I feel my burden lifted." The music at last turns dark on the final, titular cut, as Spider reveals himself to be the evil that pervades and invades any and all of us. Just one question remains: am I serious about the TV tie-in idea? Serious as a million dollars, baby. It's a match made in … well, if not Heaven, at least a film set splattered in stage blood. ~~[SPV]~~ CAREY WOMACK

PHILMONT

OH SNAP

"Is there an earthquake causing the earth to shake so violently that I can't stand on my two feet?" *Oh Snap!* No, nevermind! I'm just rocking Philmont's new pop/punk EP! Call me a sucker for anything that even slightly reminds me of my days dancing to similar artists passing through the youth group, but this act (which, by the way, named their debut *Oh Snap* simply so they could use the phrase as much as possible – if that's any indication of the sound to expect) immediately introduces an absorbable energy, combining synth with start/stop guitar and above-the-norm pop quality vocals, perhaps less-developed, but easily compatible with the likes of Halk Nelson or Relient K. "The Difference" carries an especially catchy chorus, and even mixes a drum machine into the hook. Acoustic "Another Name" perfects a softer side, with lyrical depth that proves these guys can match silliness with seriousness. ~~[EMI]~~ LEVI MACALLISTER

AFTER THE SIRENS

WHAT I HAVE TO GIVE, LET IT BE ENOUGH

If we're judging a book by its cover, *What I Have To Give, Let it be Enough* is absolutely beautiful. If we're judging by the heart, well, then it's still beautiful. And if we're to judge lyrical quality by the song titles, then what does "We Buy Jewelry When the Love Burns Out" have to say about insight to life? A masterpiece on every level, and a semi (yet more artistic) "Spill Canvas" feel, the vocalist pours out honest inquiry over pure, rock-laden combinations of guitar tonality that spans the entire spectrum of creativity. ~~[BLUE DUCK]~~ LEVI MACALLISTER

COPELAND

YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE

Choice bands have the power to conjure up such bittersweet memories. You're not sure if the experience leaves you up or down, but you know you've felt something, and for that the thought is beautiful. Copeland was never that band until now. And it's weird. It's like nothing they've done before. You get to a point where people describe sounds in colors because there's no other way to express it. Melodic layering and phenomenal vocals used instrumentally as much as lyrically paint a vibrantly melancholy masterpiece with no hue spared. This is solace. ~~[TOOTH & NAIL]~~ LEVI MACALLISTER

WRENCH IN THE WORKS

LOST ART OF HEAPING COAL

You don't find many artists that step outside the realm of conservative formulas for "creative" new music – probably for good reason: the formulaic approach sells, and we eat it like we're being spoon-fed without awareness that "Oh my Lord! New and exciting bands really do exist!" Enter: Wrench in the Works. It may not be flawless, and it's definitely not clean … in fact, their debut Facedown release is refreshingly dirty. With brute force the threesome thrusts the listener into a viscously-paced, double-bass introduction that leaves you frustrated you can hardly move to the same tempo. Unique and heavy in its moments of chaos and calm, this album – lyrically, experimentally, and collectively – stands out in a time of general relapse. ~~[FACEDOWN]~~ LEVI MACALLISTER

COPELAND

BY M. SALOMON/THE TWILIGHT'S OWN

So, you can call me Indiana Jones.

Or, maybe that guy from the Da Vinci Code. You could even go so far as calling me Sherlock Holmes – if anyone reading this even knows who that is. (He's on CSI.)

Why are you giving me all these mad props?
Well, that's easy: Because I have cracked The Code.
What Code, you ask?

Geez. What are you… a Republican? Get it together!

The Copeland Code. Consider me the ultimate Citizen Four Our Betterment.
(Google if you must.)
(Seriously, do it if you don't know what I'm talking about. I'm not always gonna be here to feed you.)

By now, even if you don't care about Copeland, you probably know that the band hi-jacked the viral* campaign Fall Out Boy was using to promote their new album. (*Forerunner in the race to replace "extreme" as Most Overused Word) End result: They basically turned a weapon, originally intended for great evil, into something for, worst case scenario, mild goodness.

I don't hate Copeland, at all. I don't hate them like I don't hate a Porsche. It's a Porsche. I don't drive it but that doesn't mean it's not an EXTREME car or anything. Relax.

Actually, they're tolerable. Even *more* than tolerable. (Not that my opinion matters – I still listen to Coldplay. Not exactly indie.) They don't make me want to auto-Jael myself with a tent spike, and that's something. I just finished watching "Control Freak" and found the song – a year or so after being released – to still sound tuneful and relevant, which in today's music culture is slightly amazing. They write good songs, and those songs certainly deserve to be heard on the radio.

Even so… they're really pushin' it.

My issue with Copeland is pretty simple: I don't like to work very hard. When some poor soul (me) needs to write a short piece on a friggin' band (them) in an age when music is struggling so hard to remain a viable commodity, the least that band could do is send me a disc. Thanks for nothing, Copeland's promotions people! Maybe just a couple emphasis tracks? You could load the tracks with viruses that will turn me into Jeff Goldblum at the end of The Fly so I won't "leak" the album. Fine. A bio? A keychain?

Something to help me write about your band might be nice, unless… hmm. Unless, you don't want me to write about your band.

Is this a "we don't want coverage in the Christian market" issue?

To be honest, I don't think so. The only recent interview I've been able to find by any member of the band – which by the way, can only be confirmed as Aaron Marsh (shoulda sent me a bio, suckers!) – was with MTV and in relation to clearing up the whole Fall Out Boy thing, so no: I don't think that's the case.

I think the band might actually be riding out this (ready?) VIRAL campaign – and from what I can tell… it's a good idea. Plus, while I couldn't get their promotion company to send me anything but emails saying they would send me something, I do take solace in knowing that they've stolen a little bit of thunder from the band that gave us Widespread Trump Cuts and the Mumble Song.

So, what is the key to The Copeland Code?

Promotion.
Chitchat.
Word O' Mouf.
I am a genius.

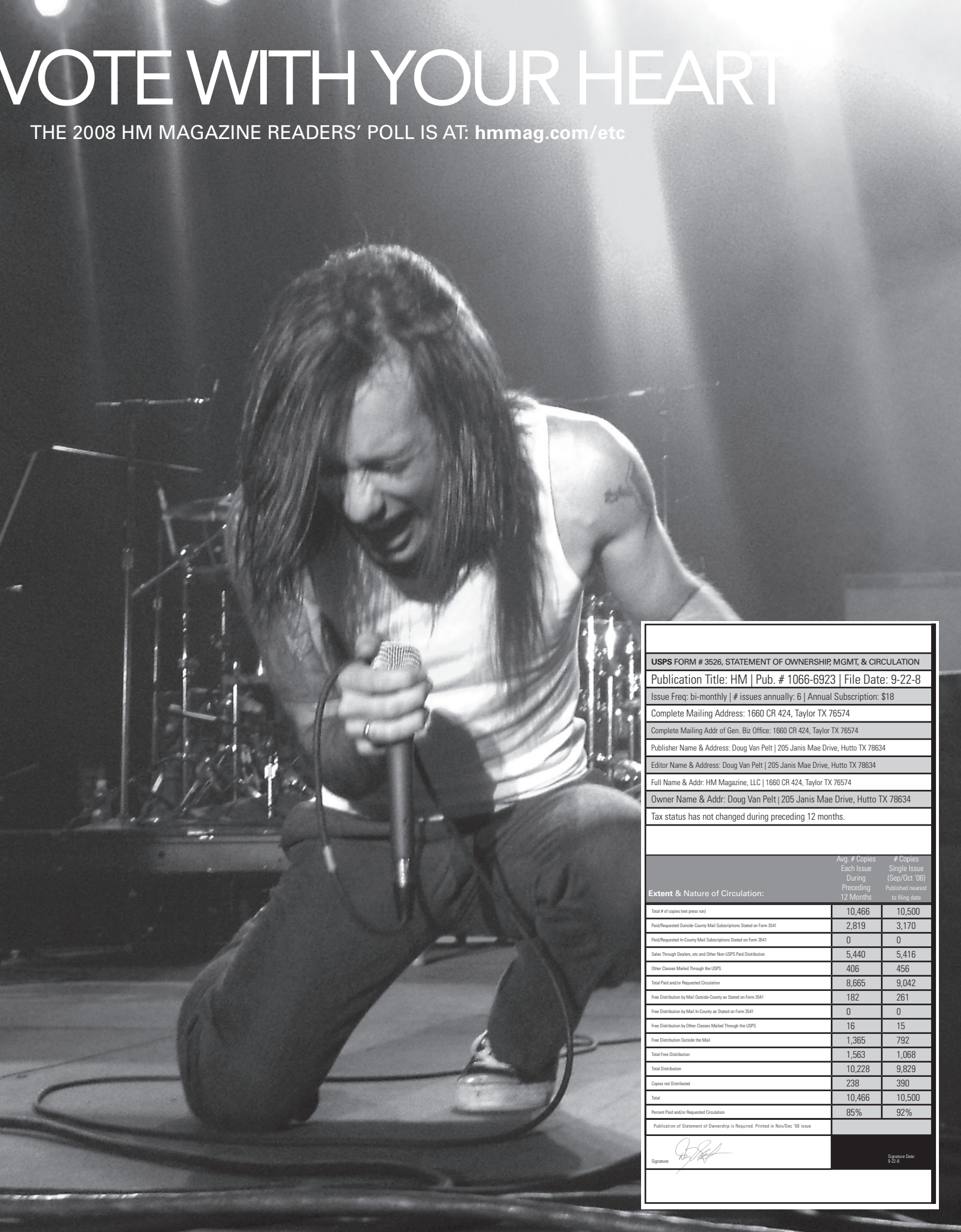
If you wanna jump down the rabbit hole yourself:
abso1utepunk.net
citizensfourourbetterment.com

I'm not gonna fall for it though. Too smart. I mean… wait – I'm writing about them.
Oh, no. I've been VIRAL-ATED!

BTW: if you're annoyed by all the jumping through of digital hoops, you can take it up with Copeland on their massive tour with Lovedrug, Lydia and Lights that begins a week after their new album *You Are My Sunshine* – the reason for all these shenanigans – drops on Oct. 14th.

I'm not looking up tour dates for you though, lazy-bones. I'm frickin' Indiana Jones.

The anti-interview



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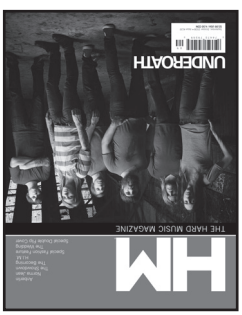
HM BACK ISSUES: READ 'EM WHILE YOU CAN

#114
20th Anniv Issue S.E.

Payable On Death
Disciple
MxPx
Every Time I Die Says
TFK
Robert Randolph
Damien Jurado
Headphones
History of C.Rock
History of C.Metal
History of HM mag

#132
War of Ages & Kutless

Means
Inhale Exhale
Ron Asheton Says
The Famine
Third Day
This Fires Embrace
Since October
PlayRadioPlay!
A Kiss For Jersey
WBCC poster
HM Spot (Behind...)



#133
Anberlin & Underoath

Special "flip" double cover
HIM Says
Brian "Head" W.
Norma Jean poster
The Showdown
Norma Jean
The Becoming
The Wedding
Krystal Meyers
Bon Voyage
Cstone & Warped

#131
P.O.D. & Showbread

Special "flip" double cover
Larry Norman tribute
Southern Metal
Christian Rock Experiment
Soul Embraced
Kittie Says
Ivoryline
Larry Norman poster
Kevin Max
Run Kid Run
w/Blood Comes...

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PARTIAL LIST OF AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES:

#088 Mar/Apr '01 **Zao**, Luti-Kriss, **The Brothers Martin** (yes!), The Alarm, FSF
#091 Sep/Oct '01 **P.O.D.**, **Dashboard Confessional**, DA, One 21, Embodyment
#098 Nov/Dec '02 **Blindside**, Dream Theater Says, **Embodyment**, Lost Dogs
#104 Nov/Dec '03 **The Ugly Truth Behind C. Rock**, J. Cash, BRMC, **Thursday Says**
#108 Jul/Aug '04 **Demon Hunter**, Antestor, **Zao**, Cool Hand Luke, Boys Night Out Says
#110 Nov/Dec '04 So&SoSays Special, In Flames, **Lamb of God**, Throwdown, **Slipknot**
#111 Jan/Feb '05 **Comeback Kid**, Showbread, Anberlin, **Taking Back Sunday Says**
#112 Mar/Apr'05 **Norma Jean**, Extol, Starflyer 59, **Eisley**, Far-Less, Scorpions Says
#113 May/Jun'05 **As I Lay Dying**, Still Remains, **Mae**, Copeland, **Fall Out Boy Says**
#115 Sep/Oct '05 **Blindside**, Mortal Treason, John Davis, **Project 86**, The Locust Says
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#117 Jan/Mar '06 **P.O.D.**, Zao, **Maylene**..., Underoath poster, **Sevendust** Says
#118 Mar/Apr'06 **Thrice**, The Classic Crime, The Violet Burning, **Collective Soul Says**
#119 May/Jun'06 **Underoath**, Project 86, Danielson, **Bleeding Through Says**
#121 Sep/Oct '06 **Norma Jean**, Showbread, **mewithoutYou**, Buckcherry Says
#125 May/Jun'07 **The Chariot**, BTA, **Virgin Black**, Skinny Puppy Says, **Chevelle**
#128 Nov/Dec '07 **Demon Hunter**, Emery, **TDWP**, Chris Cornell Says, Spoken
#129 Jan/Feb '08 **Thrice**, Pillar poster, **Korn Says**, Inked In Blood, A Plea for Purging

GRAVE ROBBER

BY CAREY WOMACK

"Gather round the campfire, boys and girls, and listen to our story." Who can't relate to this all-American summer camp experience? The storyteller continues, "WE'RE GONNA SCARE THE HELL OUTTA YOU!" Yeah, it really says that at Grave Robber's MySpace site (myspace.com/graverobberpunk), listing a bunch of tour dates just in time for Halloween. Grave Robber unabashedly plays horror punk, albeit with tongue (not so) firmly planted in (rotting) cheek. The double entendres teem through *Be Afraid* (their current disc on Retroactive Records), their packaging, their interviews, and their stage shows, like maggots feasting on rotting flesh.

Speaking of maggots, Maggot is a former bassist for the group, now made up of Wretched (vokills, shovel), Dr. Cadaver (bass, vokills), Lamentor (guitar, vokills), and Plague (smash doom tub). Did you notice that Grave Robber doesn't emote through singing or screaming, but through "vokills?" Grave Robber unearths more puns from the fertile (and I do mean fertile!) imaginations of their minds than One Bad Pig ever slopped around in its heyday. The Pig's actually one band these undead musicians pay homage to in their pressers, though the more obvious connection is seminal punk band The Misfits.

Grave Robber are not your doom and gloom, creep you out, minor key morbid death band, but high energy, old-school punk rock, with a driving snare and meaty, riffing rhythm chords. Wretched's vocals don't whine and snarl like much classic punk, nor do they sweetly serenade like bands of the pop-punk era, but his rich baritone carries the horror movie lyrics with an almost classical gravitas reminiscent of the original 1977-83 era Misfits' vocalist Glenn Danzig (or Undercover's Sim Wilson). The band's songs and approach reference the originators of horror punk, even including a '50's doo-wop tune, "I Wanna Kill You Over and Over Again."

While a title and lyric like that are liable to send your basic fundamentalist pastor (or erstwhile HM columnist Melba Jackson) on either a damning tirade or to their own early grave, the song actually talks about "killing my old man," a Pauline reference to Christ's work of sanctification of the sin nature. The reference undoubtedly owes something to an old Petra song as well, as another Petra tune actually provided the name for the band. In case you hadn't unearthed this nugget from the vault, this is not one of your "maybe we're Christians, maybe we're not" bands. Come to think about it, there's a lot of blood and gore, battles with evil, and victory over death theology (Christus Victor, anyone?), that doesn't get nearly enough play in the Church at times. With Grave Robber, you don't need to worry about "no guts, no glory" faith stance; for them, it's "all guts, all gory" (no, that's not a typo).

It's not that Wretched and the boys (uh – remains?) are intent on using their band like an iron lady to hold you captive to their message. Rather, they are 100% hardcore about their message, and 100% full-on committed to making sure you experience the most insane horror punk show on the planet. Blood-spattered costumes, eerie sound effects, macabre song titles, occasional gravel-screeched verses, zombie faces, skull masks, old school gang vocals, and instruments churning with genuine punk abandon cause their shows, recorded music, and MySpace to be welcomed by regular aficionados of the horror scene, including a rare, glowing write-up by magazine Rue Morgue.

So, the next time someone suggests you attend a Christian camp, get out your gel and comb down your (anti) devilock, put on some Holy Ghost face paint, and head on out for a little Grave Robber.

myspace.com/graverobberpunk

Murder in the rue morgue

HARDNEWS
Page sixty–three

A Skylit Drive Says

BY NATHAN DOYLE

It takes a special group of people to record three music videos in three days, but the West Coast six-man screamo power-house, A Skylit Drive, has what it takes to muscle through the madness. In June, the band shot videos for "This Isn't the End," "I'm Not a Thief, I'm a Treasure Hunter" and "Knights of the Round," all off of their newest creation, *Wires... And the Concept of Breathing*.

When asked how he felt after 72 hours of shooting, guitarist Joey Wilson eagerly responded, "Whoever's idea it was needs to get punched."

Evidently the rock band music video experience isn't nearly as glamorous as you would imagine. "Music videos are the most tiring, stressful thing ever. It's like playing live for three and a half hours straight. For the first video we did, we had to do thirty-five takes all the way through, rocking out as hard as we can. It's non-stop. As soon as we'd finish they'd be like, 'ok, now play it back again in three, two, one,' and we'd just restart it again."

"I can't even explain how much all our bodies hurt after those three videos... They played the songs over a P.A., so none of our stuff was even turned on; it's pretty much just fake rocking out in front of thirty people. It's the most awkward thing you could do in front of a person."

A Skylit Drive worked together with a rapidly growing nonprofit, To Write Love on Her Arms, during the shoot for "This Isn't the End." Wilson chimed in, "It was awesome, some of the people from To Write Love came out and hung out with us and it was awesome. I'm glad we got to help out with something like that. I'm down with trying to help people out as much as possible."

The high-energy six piece will be releasing a short split disc with Breathe Carolina. Wilson described the album saying, "Breathe Carolina is kind of techno/dance/pop music, so we're going to do three of their songs heavy in our style, and they're going to do three of our songs in their techno/pop style. Then we're going to do one song together where we write the heavy stuff and they'll sing on it and then they'll do the techno stuff and Jag (vocals) and Brian (bass) will sing and scream on it."

Expect the split disc this January.

News bullets

Here I Come Falling have broken up. "We love all our fans and everyone that's ever supported us. But after much prayer and thought, we feel it is our time to be finished. We want to thank Craig and Rise Records for all their hard work and dedication to this band." The band existed from 2006 to 2008.

Brainstorm Festival is born! It will take place from November 21-23 in club Gigant in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands. The festival will have concerts, seminars, exposition and dvd-recordings.

Underneath The Gun signs to Ferret Records. "Our goal for the music we write is to bring a pretty aggressive metal approach, but giving our own feel to it without limiting ourselves to one particular genre of metal."

Copeland releases T&N debut *You Are My Sunshine* with the help of **Aaron Sprinkle**. Copeland announced a US headlining tour with **Lovedrug**, **Lydia** and **Lights** to promote the album.

The Showdown posted a third track off their debut, *Back Breaker*, on myspace and purevolume, "Ares – I Am Vengeance."

The official 2008 Olympics soundtrack album contains music from pop artist **Krystal Meyers** and rock band **Fireflight** (Flicker Records / Provident Label Group).

David Crowder Band's best-selling *Remedy Club Tour* was featured on the silver screen in 80 cities for one night only on Aug. 18th.

With the help of Killswitch Engage guitarist Adam Dutkiewicz, producer Matt Goldman, and mixing veteran David Bendeth, **Underoath** released their fourth studio album, *Lost In The Sound of Separation*, under Tooth & Nail/Solid State Records. The group recently shot a video for "Desperate Times, Desperate Measures."

Word Records band **Remedy Drive** sold more than 4,500 copies of its *Daylight Is Coming* album its debut week.

Call To Preserve

BY LAUREL ERICKSON

From cover art to the final note, *From Isolation* is themed with redemption and hope, including all the right hardcore aspects. Florida representin' band Call to Preserve sets out a heavy album fitting of its heavy message.

"We are really happy with the way it came out and we feel like it is a step up with the band and it shows our versatility a little more I suppose … the beginning of the album is dark and almost hopeless, but in the end you start to see there is an answer in everything. I guess the overall message that we were trying to convey was that, like, even in our darkest times when we feel like we are at the bottom and that we are at our loneliest, that there is still hope and there is light and for us we find that in having a relationship in Jesus."

Maturing musically and lyrically from their first album *Unsinkable*, which included some songs written while in high school, Call to Preserve aimed to have purpose with every song and provide an overall experience for the listener, according to guitarist/lyricist Harbor Partin. "We definitely wanted to write songs that were a little more complex and explore some stuff. We tried to do more melodic hardcore stuff and used different influences that we hadn't before, like Give up the Ghost and My Life is War, maybe even like Slick Shoes."

Facing a few rough patches in the recording process, including squeezing six guys into one small apartment for the two weeks it took to record, *From Isolation* matched up with the hopes CTP had for it. "As far as sound quality goes, I don't think we could have asked for anything better, we were really happy. It was exactly what we wanted to go for." Joining the Facedown family after self-releasing an EP in 2005 and putting out their first full length with Strike First in '06, CTP has experienced nothing but support and encouragement to be the best band they can be.

Gaining respect in the booming hardcore music scene that is ever changing; Call to Preserve has a way of keeping it real while loving on people and continuing to live a straight edge lifestyle, despite any criticism they may receive. Harbor stated it as, "…standing strong in what you believe and not ever wavering because of what's cool or trendy."

Michael Knott has recorded a new **L.S.U.** record for the troops, especially those returning from combat, who are having difficulty assimilating back into life at home. This record, about PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), is about helping soldiers in distress to live one more day.

Sonshine Festival experienced one of the best years in its history, with 20,000 fans in attendance for the weekend's events. The HM Stage featured **As I Lay Dying, Flatfoot 56, August Burns Red** and others.

Soundmass signs **Scourged Flesh**, who is writing material for its upcoming album, *Chains of Slavery*.

Code of Ethics is releasing their first project since their Dove Award nomination 8 years ago, *Lost In Egypt*.

The same company that brought you *Dance Praise* has announced *Guitar Praise*. Think "Christian Guitar Hero." Some of the featured tracks you can play along to include: **The Crucified**'s "The Pit," **Red**'s "Breathe Into Me," **Spoken**'s "Falling Further," **dcTalk**'s famous "Jesus Freak," "Rebirthing" by **Skillet**, "Love Addict" by **Family Force 5**, "Same Ol' Sinner" by **Bride**, and "When The Walls Tumble Down" by **Whitecross**.

Newsboys release CD/DVD project *Newsboys Live: Houston We Are Go*. With an average audience of 3,000, the tour set a record in Houston, TX, where 8,000 attended.

MxPx received a nomination for "Rock Album of the Year" with *Secret Weapon* at this year's 39th GMA Dove Awards.

Emery have recorded a new EP titled *While Broken Hearts Prevail*. "We took three cars and used walkie talkies to communicate. We wrote the riffs over the walkie talkies."

DecembeRadio's sophomore release hit soared in at #3 on the CCM sales chart.

HM

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COVER PHOTOS **Caleb Kuhl** Pg.1
Chris Law Pg.72

PROOFREADERS **Kevan Lee, Valerie Maier, Carolyn Van Pelt**

SCRIPTURE "But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a river bank, with roots that reach deep into the water." (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

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Letters to the Edit

History Rocks!

I remember reading an article in a secular heavy metal mag about the "essential" or "best of" Christian metal albums. Could you repeat such an article ... or maybe do a new list altogether for HM or for the Heaven's Metal 'zine? While the reviews in each mag are helpful, I'd just like to have some "top picks" from everything that's out there in Christian metal & hard music. As an old guy, it would help, 'cause I don't know a lot of these newer bands. Gracias beaucoup,
–David Plunkett, via internet

Ed – Good idea. Penning that "Essential" list for Revolver a couple of years ago was hard – balancing the old and the new metal. Now that we're just two years away from our 25th Anniversary issue; I thought I'd highlight a couple of seminal, classic albums from our scene per issue, culminating in an awesome list with that issue in July of 2010. If you care to help compose such a list, find that thread on our message board at hmforums.com

Ampendectomy

I often will go back through old issues of HM to re-read articles, devotions, whatever, or see what I may have missed. I was going through the May/June issue this morning (I often find tidbits or parts of articles to use for my youth group newsletter), and noticed a phrase you used in the "From the editor" portion. You said "Believing in Christ is trusting in, clinging to, and relying on Him." Did you happen to borrow that (and it's great if you did) from Glenn Kaiser, on "Glenn's rap" of the *Live Bootleg* album? Ever since I heard him use that phrase, I thought it was an excellent way of wording it. Thanks!
–Brian Lang, via internet

Ed – I love that phrase. It's from the Amplified Bible, which expounds upon the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew text, defining the word "believe" as "clinging to, trusting in, and relying on." It adds to the word, like an amplifier, eh?

Think about the negative space

I received your care package yesterday in the mail. Thank you so much for your prompt response (and the HM stickers). It's amazing how much Christian music information I miss when I don't get my HM Mag. Thanks again,
–Jonathan Bishop, via internet

Ed – The stickers are like a little way of saying "Thanks" to you for reading HM.

Correction is worth it

Probably not worth your time, but I wanted to clarify. The review of DecembeRadio's new CD, *Satisfied*, lists Eric Miker as lead guitar. Brian Bunn is the one delivering the Southern rock guitar attack. Grace & peace,
–Corrine Johnson, via internet

Ed – I bet Brian hates us now...

Was I mistaken?

I thought when I switched to this magazine from the out of print CCM magazine subscription I was getting a Christian hard music magazine. I just received my latest magazine of yours with Anberlin on the cover, and could not believe the article about a band H.I.M. These are not Christian bands or followers of Christ. The person being interviewed from this band is a lost sheep or maybe a goat (evil)! What is stuff like this doing in your magazine? Please refer to 2 Corinthians 6:14-16. All your subscribers are being deceived by your magazine. I would like you to remove me from your subscription list. I know I get emails from your magazine (which I will be getting off the email list) and you state you want more subscribers, but you will lose more people by being of this world and some of the music in it and your magazine will fail and not prosper. I pray that you will take my email to heart and really look at what is being fed to your subscribers.
–Jeremy Wood, Monroe, MI

Ed – I hope you receive my gentle correction that you have perhaps mis-understood our "So & So Says" feature; which I think you will come to appreciate for what it is.

Red Jumpsuit Apparatus

I was just wondering if there was any possibility of HM doing an interview with either Forever the Sickest Kids or The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus... They're both AWESOME bands and both made up of Christian dudes. It would be cool to see what they have to say about their faith and music.
–Hannah Utterback, via internet

Ed – Check out HM Podcast episode #8.

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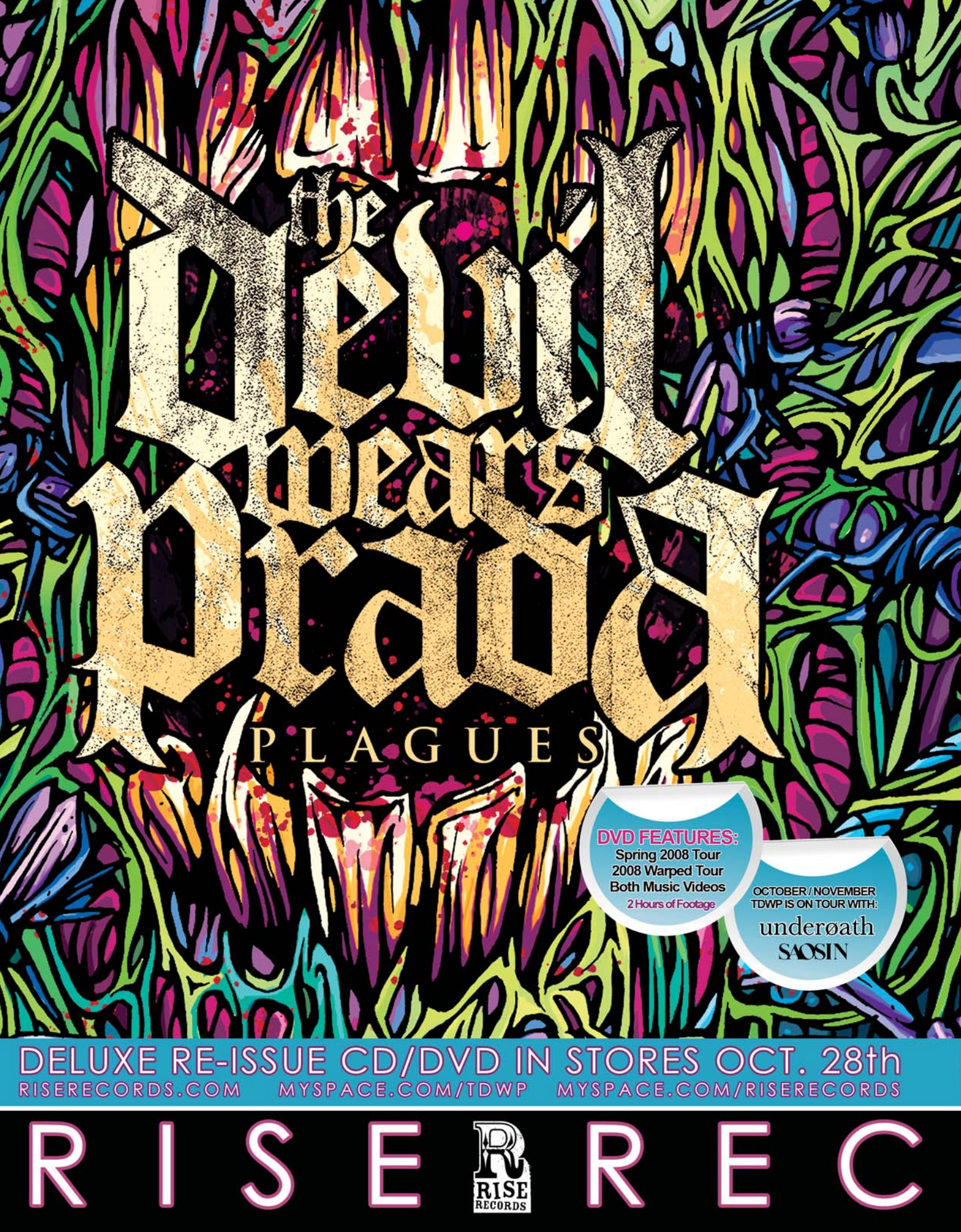
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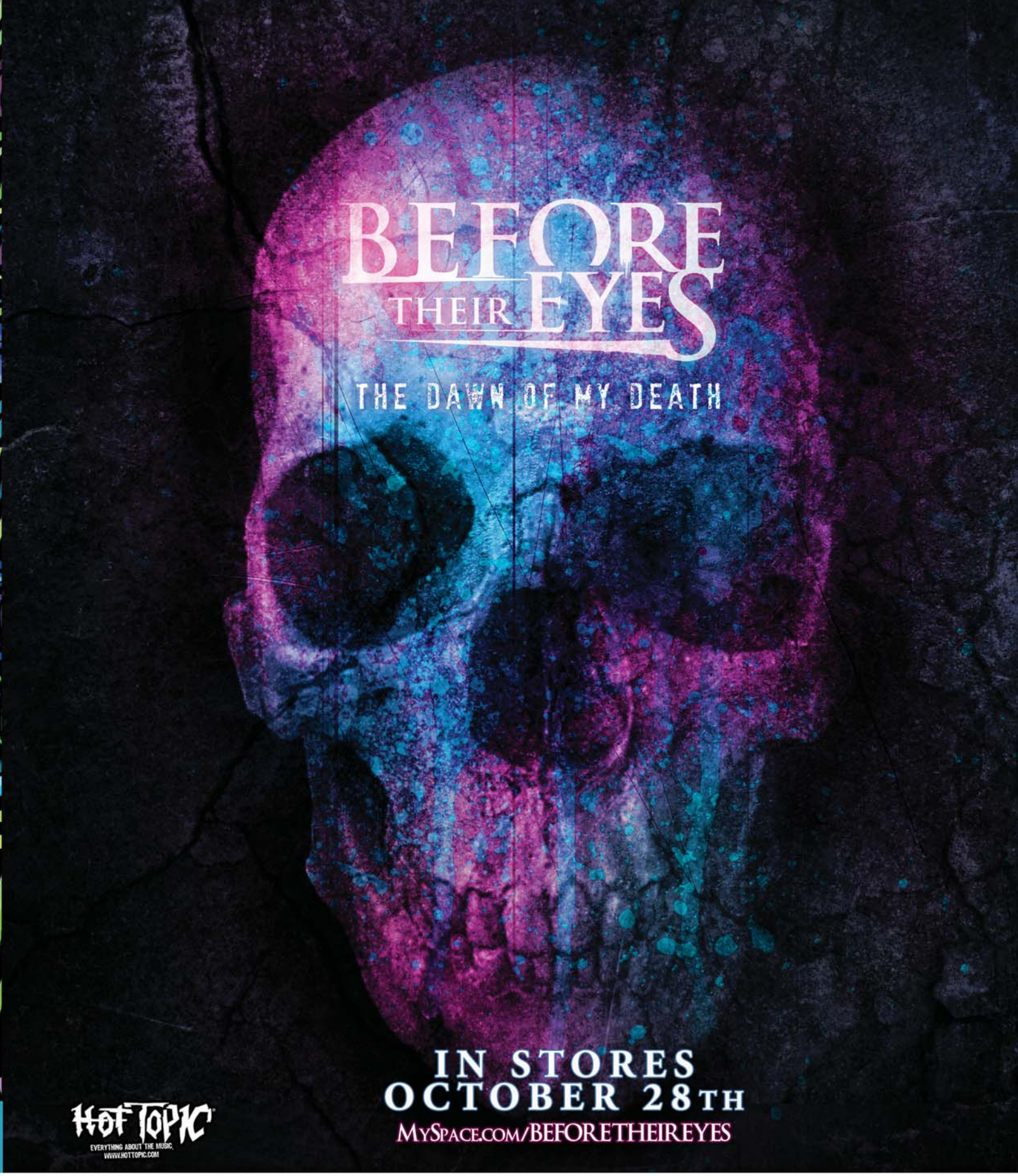

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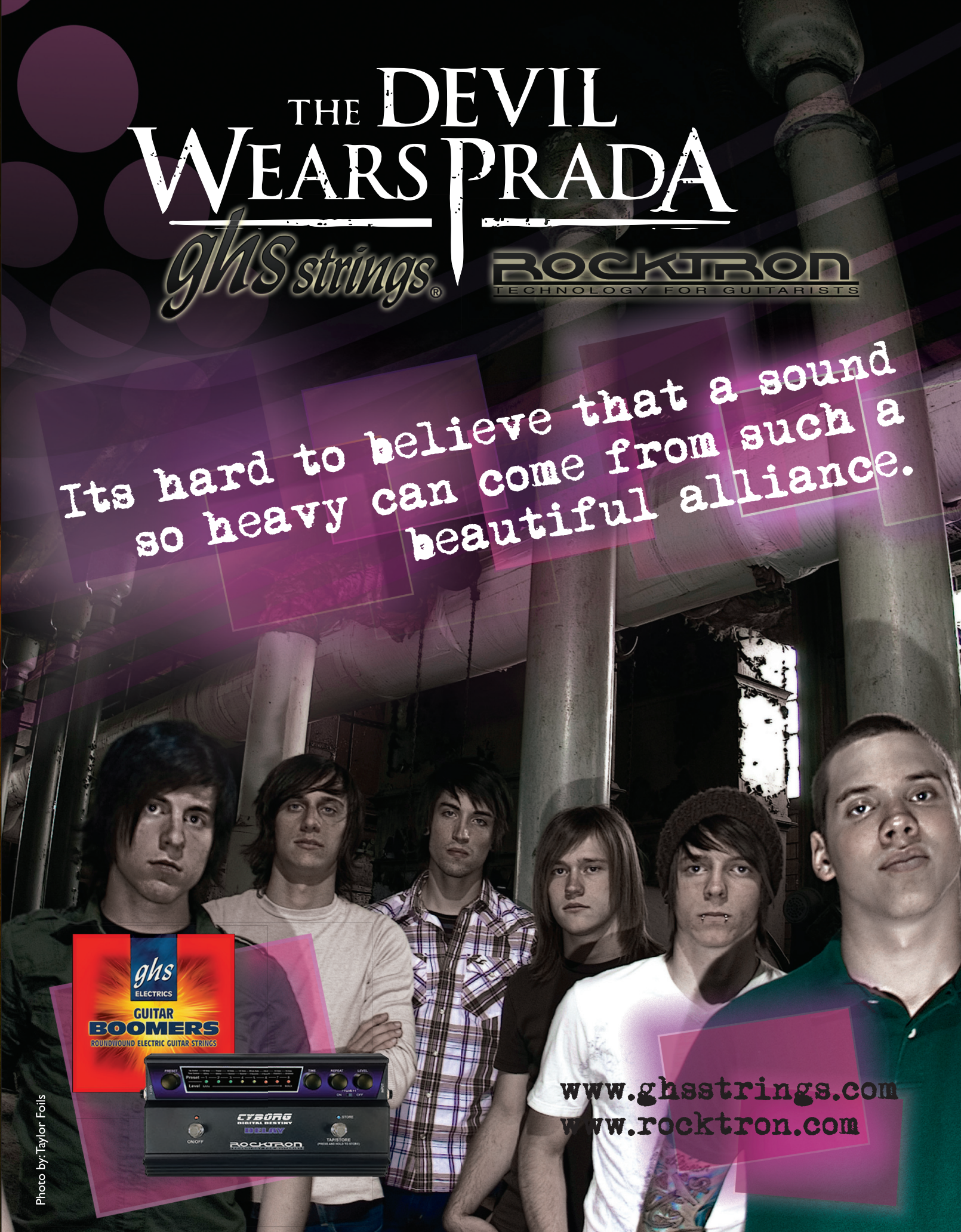

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Photo by: Taylor Foils

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"I'm a guitar tone junkie…
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AUDIX

The i5

The i5 is a dynamic microphone that can be used for any instrument miking application for stage and studio. With its sleek styling and unique design, the i5 features a durable cast zinc alloy body, dent resistant grill, and black e-coat finish. Every model is attractively laser etched with its model and serial number.

The i5 is designed with a cardioid polar pattern, allowing it to focus on the particular instrument that is being miked without picking up other instruments or ambient noise on stage. With a smooth and uniform frequency response of 50 Hz – 16 kHz and an ability to handle sound pressure levels in excess of 140 dB, the i5 can be used for a wide variety of applications and for all genres of music.

"I'm in the studio with P.O.D. and lovin' the i5 on guitar cabs. Great punch in the upper mids and perfect for heavy guitars that need that special drive. Also fantastic on snare – it can sure handle serious SPL's!" —Travis Wyrick (Producer, Engineer, Mixer – P.O.D., Charlie Daniels, Pillar)

VP of Sales and Marketing, Cliff Castle, states: "The i5 was brought about by demands from our dealers and customers for a general purpose, high performance instrument microphone at a very competitive price. Over the past few years we have produced a wide variety of application specific mics for drums and percussion – the i5 is a synthesis of everything we have learned along the way. Even though the i5 is aimed at a wide audience and will be produced in high volume, it will still maintain the same tight quality specifications and quality control standards that is now a trademark of all Audix products."

The i5, with a suggested retail price of $179, includes a heavy duty mic clip and carrying pouch.

The DP7

In 2007, the Audix DP7 was awarded the Musikmesse International Press Award (MIPA) for Best Drum Microphones as voted on by 107 magazines worldwide. The DP7 microphones, which were developed for professional live sound, recording and broadcast applications, have been considered by a growing number of artists and engineers to be the best instrument microphones available today.

As the name implies, the DP7 contains seven microphones. At the heart of the mic system is the popular D6 dynamic kick drum microphone. The i5 handles the snare drum with perfect accuracy and the two D2 mics work great on rack toms. For floor tom there is a D4, and rounding out the set, there are two ADX51 condenser microphones with pad and roll-off for overhead miking. Additionally there are 4 D-Vice rim mounting clips which eliminate the need for mic stands for snare and toms. The entire mic kit is packaged in a convenient aluminum carrying case with a suggested retail price of $1,747.

Optional accessories for the DP Series packages include right angle XLR-XLR mic cable, the D-Flex mounting clip, the D-Clamp clip for lug nut mounting, and the STAND-KD pedestal mic stand for use with bass drum and guitar cabs.

For more information on any of the Audix microphones, please visit www.audixusa.com.

AUDIX MICROPHONES

For a dealer near you call Toll Free 800-966-8261 Ph 503-682-6933 Fax 503-682-7114 www.audixusa.com
Also check out www.MySpace.com/AudixMicrophones
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TWO GREAT BANDS, TWO BROTHERS, TWO TERRIFIC DRUMMERS... ONE CHOICE FOR MICROPHONES: AUDIX

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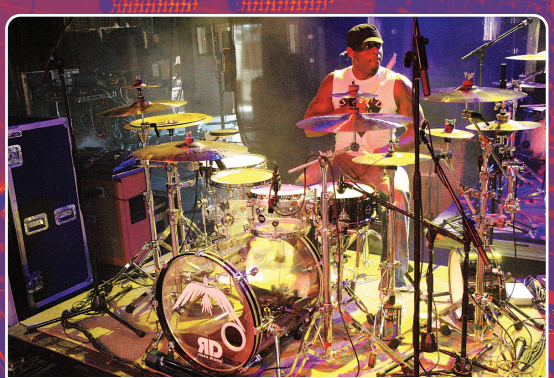
PILLAR

BRANDON ESTELLE
SUPERCHICK



"AUDIX MICROPHONES COME THROUGH FOR ME NIGHT AFTER NIGHT. THEY ARE A BIG PART OF MY SOUND."
—LESTER ESTELLE/PILLAR

"AUDIX MAKES KILLER MICS, THEY MAKE MY DRUMS SOUND HUGE!"
—BRANDON ESTELLE/SUPERCHICK

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